

ANGLO- SOVIET JOURNAL

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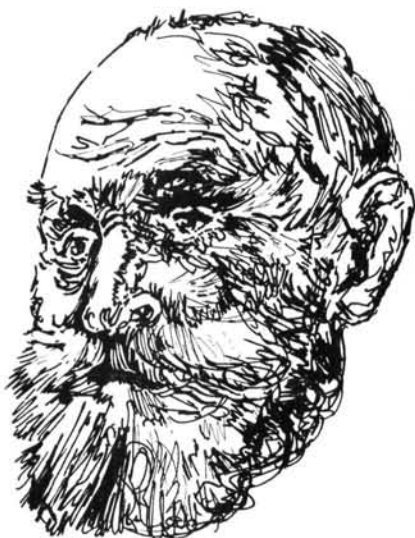
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The Editor's Notebook

A 'WIND OF CHANGE' is blowing strongly in Soviet intellectual life and sweeping away cobwebs of dogmatism in one sector after another. One after another theories and systems that have been propagated with all the authority and power of the state and Party are being re-examined, and modified or rejected, as at the recent agricultural conferences, where the wind blew at gale force, uprooting V. R. Williams's deeply implanted theory on ley farming.

A lesser blast drew my attention just about the time when a British medical delegation returning from the USSR gave its views on the state of Soviet medicine. While speaking highly of Soviet surgery, the delegation found the pharmaceutical industry lagging, with a shortage of drugs and medicaments in wide use abroad. The blast to which I refer came from Professor V. V. Parin, member of the USSR Academy of Medical Sciences, who has been intimately concerned with the medical side of the Soviet space programme, and appeared in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*; it throws some light on this point in the delegation's observations.

Parin's article is concerned with the harm done to Soviet medicine in the period of the 'cult of the personality' by the elevation of theory to dogma, in particular Pavlovian theory. He reviews the 1950 joint session of the Academies of Science and Medical Sciences, and its effects. 'The great innovator . . . could never have dreamed that his work would be converted into a sort of hybrid of the prayer book and a stick for intimidating "heretics"', he writes. That, however, he says, was the effect of the session. 'A group of Pavlov's pupils announced that they had a monopoly of the truth . . . polemics were based on garbled quotations . . . rather than facts . . .' and 'administrative pressure was used at times to clinch arguments.'

Professor Parin describes the consequences in a strongly worded passage: 'Clinical medicine was expecting new means of preventing and combating disease from the scientists, but the only element introduced into practice from the so-called highroads of physiology were the "safety regulations". However, neatness of the staff, cleanliness in hospital wards, politeness towards patients, the good habit of talking in whispers in hospital, elements of psychotherapy and other elements of what were solemnly proclaimed at the time "the Pavlov system" scarcely required such high scientific substantiation. Greater stress on the need to observe these time-honoured rules . . . could only be welcomed. It is regrettable, however, that "psychotherapy" and "psychoprophylactic preparation" of patients for operations, and of expectant mothers for childbirth, were completely substituted for the development and improvement of modern pain-killing methods by means of new drugs and new anaesthetic equipment.

'In consequence medical practice was divorced in those years from theory, because theory could not meet its needs. . . . The surgeon who ascribed appendicitis, in his dissertation or paper, to cortical disturbances preferred in practice to use the tried method of surgery to treat this condition rather than the "Pavlov medicine" (bromine and caffeine).

'A few years after the "Pavlov session", life compelled scientists to undertake a thorough check-up of the "theory of cortical-visceral pathology". . . . Had this . . . work been done a few years earlier it would have saved Soviet medicine a great deal of effort and money.

'An attempt was made to ostracise almost all the new contributions made

to science in the 14 years after Pavlov's death, including, of course, the new methods of investigation. The methodological level of the experiments of 1936 were declared insuperable. However, in 1950 many of our own physiologists, and incidentally also our foreign colleagues, using Pavlov's methods of conditioned reflexes in their study of higher nervous activity, began to combine them with new ones based on the use of complex recording equipment. Researches were conducted by combining many methods. Pavlov's "orthodox" pupils scornfully "denounced" electrophysiological methods for studying higher nervous activity, since, in their opinion, these methods are used "for recording phenomena that at best can merely concretise mechanisms already known to us". Had the "veto" of the dogmatists been effective, we still would have known nothing about important laws discovered after years of research, laws the existence of which was not even suspected by physiologists before, and which now constitute the glory of modern science. Without extensive and bold improvement of the new methods of research, and of radiotelemetry in particular, the achievements of Soviet space biology and medicine would have been impossible. However, some of our "orthodox Pavlovians" are still stuck at the ancient level of technique and methods of experiment. And they credit this "purity" of experiment to themselves as an achievement !

LEARNING TO ARGUE

ANOTHER example of the winds of change was the lecture visit to Moscow and Leningrad of Professor A. J. Ayer, the Oxford philosopher. His Sunday newspaper account of it was interesting to read and showed that Soviet and Western philosophers, too, can find a professional meeting ground even when their philosophies are as much opposed as Professor Ayer's and Marxism. But Professor Ayer seemed, from his article, to have been a little puzzled and surprised at his invitation, though an explanation is not difficult. It is to be found in the resolution on propaganda adopted by the Communist Party Central Committee at the beginning of 1960. One of its points was that students and intellectuals must learn to debate with their Western colleagues and to meet their arguments. Professor Ayer expressed a certain satisfaction at having argued in Moscow against basic concepts of Marxist philosophy and calling them in question. He seems, indeed, to have given his hosts a good lesson in argument, and can congratulate himself, therefore, on having been a good guest.

Academician Peter Kapitsa appears to have given Soviet philosophers much harsher treatment than Professor Ayer, around the same time. At the annual meeting of the USSR Academy he, in the words of the *Vestnik AN SSSR*, 'expressed a number of criticisms addressed to Soviet philosophers, whose works on natural philosophy, he considered, suffered from a divorcement from living problems and a dogmatic approach to the treatment of the most important achievements of modern science'.

INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM OF WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

JUST as our meteorologists have begun to accustom us to the centigrade temperature scale, their whole paraphernalia of bars and millibars is to be swept into the limbo in the USSR.

And while our children continue to struggle with conversion problems involving units of weights and measures at variance with the decimal system, built into our system of counting, Soviet students and senior pupils are passing

over to the new international system of weights and measures adopted by the 11th General Conference on Weights and Measures held in Paris in October 1960. The new system was adopted as the state system of the USSR on October 18, 1961, when the Committee on Standards, Measures and Measuring Instruments confirmed USSR Standard GOST 9867-61 'the International System of Units' effective from January 1, 1963.

The new system is to be introduced in science, industry and education. Steps are being taken to introduce it into all Soviet state standards and measuring instruments. The RSFSR Minister of Education has ordered it to be used in the teaching of physics and astronomy in the 9th and 10th classes of Russian schools, beginning with the 1962-3 year, while student-teachers in training colleges are having to learn it now. The Minister of Higher Education has ordered its use in lectures and in laboratory and practical work as from the autumn of this year in higher educational institutions and specialised secondary schools. An optional course on the new system is to be made available for all students in technical and engineering faculties. And all publishing houses have been obliged to use the international system in textbooks and technical literature published after January 1, 1963; textbooks being currently prepared for press are to include a leaflet or appendix on the new system with examples of how to make the necessary conversions.

This is not the place to go into details; in any case the SCR Science Section is publishing a bulletin giving the new system as adopted in the USSR with the Russian abbreviations for the units. It may interest lay readers to know, however, that those rather baffling angstroms, maxwells, gaussses and ergs that they have met with from time to time in general books on science and astronomy are to disappear, along with the more familiar micron, calorie, horsepower, kilowatt-hour, carat, and degree (of angular measurement). We will gradually have to acquaint ourselves with micrometres, nanometres, newtons, luxes, degrees Kelvin, etc.

Lest our remarks be read as disparagement, we hasten to add that the new system is a great advance and should do much to clear up the confusion that at present reigns in science and engineering. Its adoption, it is said in the Soviet press, is 'a most important progressive act, the fruit of long years of work to create a universal and practically convenient system'. Its introduction in the USSR is being treated as a measure of 'great state importance' for the progress of science and engineering, the development of the Soviet economy, and the advancement of education.

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PABLO PICASSO

Ilya Ehrenburg

Pablo Picasso was recently awarded a second International Lenin Peace Prize. This article about him by his long-standing friend Ilya Ehrenburg was originally published in Moscow as the introduction to a book about the painter and his work.

ONE cold winter's day at the beginning of 1915, Picasso took me home to his studio, not far from the Café Rotonde in the Rue Schoelcher. Its windows looked out on to Montparnasse cemetery; but Paris cemeteries are merely abstract cities of straight roads, vaults and tomb-stones and quite devoid of the poetry of Russian or English graveyards.

It was impossible to turn round in the studio, as completed canvases and pieces of cardboard, tin, wire and wood lay about everywhere, with tubes of paint in the corner, more tubes of paint than I had ever seen in a shop. Picasso explained that he had often not had enough money for paints, so when he had sold some pictures recently he had decided to equip himself with paints 'for the rest of his life'. I noticed there were pictures on the walls, on broken stools, on cigar-boxes; he admitted he could not bear to see an unpainted surface. He works with an incredible kind of frenzy. With other people months of creative activity are followed by periods of idleness, when the poet or artist, in the words of Pushkin, 'indulges in a cool sleep', but Picasso has spent his whole life working, and goes on working with the same fury. The various eccentricities that journalists and photographers fasten on are not part of his real life, they are only off-moments of relaxation.

I asked him about the pieces of tin, and he said he wanted to use them but did not quite know how. There seems to be no material in which he has not worked. He has been learning all his life, for he loves craftsmanship. When he was 40 he learnt how to handle sheet-iron from the Spanish craftsman Julio González, at 60 he learnt the art of lithography, and at 70 he became a potter.

In the studio were a Negro sculpture and a large picture, depicting a peace conference, by the customs officer Rousseau, an amateur painter whose works now decorate galleries all over the world. Picasso explained that Negro sculptors alter the proportions of the head, body and arms not because they do not see people clearly or because they cannot handle their material; they simply have different conceptions of proportion, just as Japanese masters have different ideas of perspective. 'Do you really believe this customs officer Rousseau never saw a classical painting?' he asked me. 'He often used to go to the Louvre. But he wanted to work in a different way. . .' Picasso was the first to realise that our age requires plain dealing, frankness and strength.

At that time he was 34 years old, but looked younger, with his very lively, penetrating and incredibly black eyes, black hair and small, almost feminine, hands. He would often sit moodily in the Café Rotonde, scarcely uttering a word; at other times he would be full of spirits, and joke and tease his friends. There was a feeling of restlessness about him, and this reassured me; looking at him, I realised that what was happening to me was no personal matter, no illness, but a peculiarity of the age.

I have already mentioned that Picasso was sometimes dear to me because of his destructive power; this was how I knew him and grew to love him in the years of World War I. It is generally assumed that at this period Picasso

was indifferent to everything savouring of politics. If we mean by this the replacement of ministers and newspaper controversies, then it is true that he was inclined to look for anecdotes rather than political declarations in *Le Matin*. But I remember how pleased he was at the news of the February Revolution. It was then that he gave me his picture, and we said goodbye for many years.

They say that friendship, like love, needs close contact and withers with long separation. At times I would not see Picasso for eight or ten years, but never once did I find him remote or changed as a human being. (This is precisely why I do not remember exactly when he said such-and-such a thing to me—he might have said it in 1914 or 1954.)

I remember various studios of his: in the Rue de la Boétie, in a smart residential district, where he seemed like a casual visitor, almost an intruder; in the Rue Saint Augustin*, in a very old house, a huge studio with Spaniards, doves, enormous canvases and that deliberately organised disorder which Picasso engenders everywhere; a barn in Vallauris, full of tin boxes, clay, sketches, glass balls, scraps of posters, cast-iron bars and a shanty where he slept on a bed, covered with newspapers, letters and photographs; a big, bright house called 'California' in Cannes, with children, dogs, the same heap of letters and telegrams, huge canvases and a bronze Picasso nanny-goat in the garden.

I had long nicknamed him 'Devil' as a joke. This word in Russian is difficult for a Frenchman to pronounce, but the 'ch' sound exists in Spanish, and Pablo would smilingly declare 'I am a *chort*'. If he is a devil he is certainly a very special one, one who argues with God about the universe, rebelliously and uncompromisingly. A devil is generally not only cunning but wicked; but Picasso is a good devil.

How naïve, ignorant or unscrupulous are people who look upon his great, difficult, creative career as an attempt to be original, a desire to 'impress the middle classes', a passion for fashionable 'isms'! He has told me more than once how amused he was when people wrote that he 'searches for new forms': 'I do not search for new forms, I find them'. He once told me that sometimes, when he sits down to paint, he does not know himself whether the picture will turn out cubist or purely realistic—that is determined by the model and the emotional state of the artist.

At Vallauris a beautiful young American girl sat for him, and he did dozens of sketches of her and painted her in oils. In the first portrait she looked very like what those around her saw; not a single realist, in the narrowest sense of the word, could have found any objection to it. Then gradually Picasso began to take her face to pieces. Obviously this model had revealed herself to him not simply through her angelic appearance; he had found traits which betrayed her character and had begun to study them. 'But that's a pig in a cube', joked a visitor to the exhibition who was standing by my side and looking at the 10th portrait of this American girl, not in the least suspecting that the portrait of the beauty, which had thrown him into ecstasies, was the original of the 'cubist pig'.

After the Wrocław Congress in 1948 we were in Warsaw, where Picasso sketched my portrait in pencil; I sat for him in a room in the old Bristol Hotel. When he stopped drawing I said: 'Finished already?', for it seemed a very short sitting to me. He burst out laughing, and said 'You see, I've known you for 40 years'. This portrait seems to me not only very like me (or rather I am like it), but profoundly psychological. All Picasso's portraits uncover (at times unmask) the model's inner world. A very long time ago, when I

* Rue des Grands Augustins?—Tr.

was talking to Picasso about my love for the Impressionists, he remarked: 'They wanted to depict the world as they saw it. That does not appeal to me. I want to depict the world as I imagine it.'

Of course, many of Picasso's pictures are difficult to understand because of their complicated ideas and emotions and their unusual forms. I happened to be the interpreter at the first conversation between Picasso and Alexander Fadeev in Wroclaw.

Fadeev: I had better tell you straight out that I don't understand some of your things. Why do you sometimes choose forms that people can't understand?

Picasso: Tell me, Comrade Fadeev, did they teach you to read at school?

Fadeev: Of course they did.

Picasso: How did they do it?

Fadeev (with his shrill laugh): Bee—ee—bee . . .

Picasso: The same with me—'bee'. Good, but did they also teach you to understand painting?

Fadeev started laughing again, and began to talk about something else.

If you consider the whole of Picasso's creative work it becomes clear that he has transformed painting. After the Impressionists people saw nature afresh, no longer through the eyes of the Bolognese school. Artists painted exclusively from nature—portraits, landscapes and still life. Composition became the monopoly of artists of the academic trend. Above all, artists were afraid of 'literary' subjects, as they expressed it. Perhaps the last composition painted in France by a great artist is Courbet's *Funeral at Ornans*, painted in 1851. In 1937, nearly 100 years later, Picasso painted his *Destruction of Guernica*.

When I arrived in Paris from Madrid I went at once to the Spanish pavilion at the International Exhibition and froze on the spot. I had caught sight of *Guernica*. I saw it twice after that, in 1946 in the New York Museum and in 1956 in the Louvre at the Picasso Retrospective Exhibition; and each time I felt the same emotion. How could Picasso have foreseen what was to come? The civil war in Spain was still fought in the old way. For the German air force, certainly, it was merely a manoeuvre, but the attack on Guernica, though not a big operation, was the first try-out. Then came World War II. Then came Hiroshima. Picasso's canvas is the horror of the future, a great repetition of Guernicas, of atomic catastrophes. We see before us fragments of a shattered world, madness, hatred, despair, annihilation.

(What is realism, and is the artist realistic who tries to depict the drama of Hiroshima by carefully tracing sores on the bodies of one or of dozens of stricken beings? Does reality not really need a different, more general, approach, where it is not a single incident that is revealed, but the essence of tragedy?)

Picasso's power lies in his ability to express the most profound ideas and the most complicated feelings in the language of art. When still a boy he could draw like a master; his lines convey everything he wants and are completely under his control; he is so devoted to painting that he is furious or in agony if he cannot immediately find the colour he wants.

There was a time when we cultivated painting that resembled enormous coloured photographs. I remember an amusing conversation from this period between Picasso and a young Leningrad painter.

Picasso: Can you get paints where you are?

Painter: Of course, as many as you like.

Picasso: In what form?

Painter (puzzled): In tubes.

Picasso: But what is written on the tubes?

Painter (still more puzzled): The name of the colour—'ochre', 'burnt sienna', 'ultramarine', 'chrome'.

Picasso: You should rationalise the production of pictures. Mixtures should be prepared in factories, and printed on the tubes of paint should be the words: 'For the face', 'For hair', 'For a uniform'. That would be much more sensible.

Some authors, when writing about Picasso, have tried to describe his enthusiasm for politics as something accidental, a mere whim; he is an original, they say, who loves bull-fights and became a communist for no particular reason. He always took his own political opinions very seriously, however. I remember a dinner in his studio on the day of the opening of the Paris Peace Congress. His daughter was born on that day, and he called her Paloma, which means 'dove' in Spanish. There were three of us at table, Picasso, Paul Eluard and I. We spoke first of doves, and Pablo told us how his artist father, when painting doves, used to tell his son to finish off the claws, as he was sick of them. Then we began to talk about doves in general. Picasso loves them, and always keeps them in his home; he said laughingly that they are greedy, quarrelsome birds, and he really did not know why they had become the symbol of peace. Then he went on to talk about his own doves, and showed us hundreds of drawings for a poster; he knew the bird on it was destined to go round the world. He talked of the congress, of war and of politics. I remember one remark of his: 'Communism for me is closely bound up with my entire life as an artist'. The enemies of communism never trouble to think about this bond, which even seems enigmatical to some communists at times.

Picasso then painted more doves for the Warsaw and Vienna congresses. Hundreds of thousands of people have got to know and love him only through his doves. Intellectual snobs scoff at this. Ill-wishers accuse him of seeking an easy way to fame. But his doves are closely connected with all his creative work—with minotaurs and goats, with old men and young girls. Of course, his dove is only a speck in the riches created by him, but how many millions of people have come to know and revere Raphael from reproductions of only one of his pictures, *The Sistine Madonna*; how many millions have come to know and revere Chopin only because he wrote the music they hear at funerals! So it is silly for the snobs to laugh. Naturally, you cannot appreciate Picasso from one dove alone, but we had to have Picasso to create such a dove.

Picasso himself is not only not offended by this love of simple people for his dove and for him, but is continually being moved by it. In the autumn of 1949 I was with him in Rome at a meeting of the Peace Committee. After the meeting, in a big square, we were walking along a working-class street when the passers-by recognised him, took him to a small *trattoria*, gave him a drink and embraced him; women asked him to take their children in his arms. It was a demonstration of an affection which cannot be assumed. They had not seen his pictures, of course, and if they had they would not have understood much about them, but they knew that he, a great artist, was for them and with them, and so they embraced him.

At conferences in Wroclaw and Paris he used to sit all the time with headphones on, listening intently. I had to turn to him a number of times with a request, as it nearly always turned out at the last minute that one of his drawings was needed to ensure the success of the conference or for some campaign or other in defence of peace. And, no matter how absorbed he was in other work, he always complied with my request.

Now and then some of those who held the same views as his would criticise or reject his paintings. He used to accept this sorrowfully but calmly, with the words: 'There are always rows in the family circle.'

He knew that his pictures were displayed in the art galleries of America, knew that when he wanted to go to the United States with a delegation from

the World Council of Peace he was refused a visa. He knew something else as well: the country which he loved and believed in had long been reacting unfavourably to his work. Once when we met he said laughingly to me: 'You and I have had it.' Not long before this I had written an article for a literary paper, not about painting, of course, but about the fight for peace (this was in 1949); in the article I stated that the best brains of the West were on our side, and cited Picasso. There was a footnote to this article, which expressed regret that I had not criticised the formalistic elements in Picasso's work. Naturally, the anti-soviet French papers reprinted not my article, but the editor's footnote. Pablo laughed about it and said it was not worth getting upset about—you could not do everything all at once.

Nothing could shake his faith in the Soviet Union. In 1956 some of his friends, giving way to their confused state of mind, asked him to put his signature to protests, declarations and statements against it. He refused to do so.

His exhibition in Moscow was a great joy to me. Too many people came to see it, for the organisers, fearing there would not be enough visitors, had sent out far too many invitations. The crowd burst through the barriers, afraid they would not get in. The director ran up to me, looking pale and crying: 'Calm them down; I'm afraid someone may get hurt.' I said over the microphone: 'Comrades, for 25 years we've been waiting for this exhibition. Won't you please wait quietly for 25 minutes?' Three thousand people burst out laughing, and order was restored. It was my job to open the exhibition in the name of the 'Section of Friends of French Culture'. Ceremonies of this kind usually bore me, but that day I was as excited as a schoolboy. I was handed a pair of scissors, and it seemed to me that I was cutting not merely through a ribbon, but through a curtain, behind which stood Pablo. Of course, there were heated arguments about the exhibition. This always happens at Picasso's exhibitions—he enraptures, infuriates, amuses, delights, but never leaves anyone indifferent.

'Inconsistencies'? All right, if you like. 'In Picasso's work there are a number of inconsistencies.' But let us remember the dates—his first works were shown in 1901, and now as I write these lines 1960 is at the door. Have there been few inconsistencies during those 60 years? Picasso does not live in the past or in the future; he expresses the complexity, the confusion, the despair and the hope of his age. He destroys and creates, loves and hates.

I have been very lucky really. In my lifetime I have met a few of the people who have determined the shape of this century. I have seen not only the storms and fogs, but also the shadows of those standing on the captain's bridge. I look back upon that far-off day when I first met Picasso as one of the great strokes of luck of my life.

Gulomstock i Sinyavsky. Picasso. M. 1960. Translated by K.B.

TALKING ABOUT FREEDOM

Margarita Aligher

A famous Russian poet takes up a conversation she had with a London journalist one evening in July.

IT was a mild London evening at the end of July when I dropped in to see some Moscow journalist friends at the Prince of Wales Hotel. They had a few London newspapermen visiting them, and I was immediately drawn into an atmosphere of animated amiability, natural among people wishing to see and know more about each other.

We spent a very pleasant evening, one that we recall with pleasure. We all went for a walk, mingled with the crowds in Piccadilly, and wandered through the streets of Soho . . . We felt perfectly at ease with our new acquaintances—there was complete harmony and mutual understanding between us.

On the way back, one of our companions asked me about my work.

‘Do you only write poetry, or do you write other things as well—short stories or newspaper articles?’

‘I write articles for the papers whenever the need arises’, I replied. ‘I also try to write short stories, though I haven’t attempted to publish any of them as yet. I translate a good deal, but in the main I write poetry, lyric poetry . . .’

‘But you must find that very difficult.’ My companion’s voice carried a note of sympathy. ‘You can’t write what you want, can you?’

Taking a deep breath to quell a rising feeling of irritation, I said: ‘The form I write in has the priceless advantage of being expressive only when it is dictated by the heart. Otherwise it cannot exist.’

‘Ah yes, poetry! I realise that. You are right. But still, you are forced to write what you’re told, aren’t you?’

‘Forced? Verses? May I ask you, by the way, whether you have read any of my poetry? I should be very interested to know what you think caused me to write any one of my poems.’

But my English acquaintance had not read any of my poems, and he was visibly perturbed and embarrassed. As for my initial irritation, to tell the truth, it resolved into placid boredom and complete loss of interest in the man walking by my side. I noted with pleasure that we were already in Bayswater Road and near the end of our walk. I tried to pass the rest of the time away with banal chatter about nothing: ‘How wonderful the air is in this part of the city, don’t you think? Somebody said that Hyde Park was the lungs of London . . .’

At last we came to the door of my hotel. I was home.

‘Thank you very much for the lovely time. So glad to have met you. Good night, sir.’

Yes, I was very glad to meet you. I am aware that you are an honest man, our real friend and well disposed towards us. You have been to our country and have written about it seriously, with genuine interest and attention. So it is all the more vexing that our conversation ended so flatly and bluntly. Perhaps it was wrong of me to avoid a straightforward and serious talk with you. I should have gone on with it. It was not civil on my part to by-pass it. My solemn remark regarding the uniqueness of poetry, and the manœuvre that reduced a general question to a point in particular, could hardly have convinced you and changed your views on the matter.

It is most important that those views be radically changed. It is important that our questioners and colleagues who are as misled as my London acquaintance stop repeating general unsubstantiated and absurd statements that can only irritate and insult us.

It is of this that I want to talk to you, my London friends, with whom we are coming into contact ever more frequently. There must be complete mutual understanding and clarity among us, above all in the sphere of writing and our views on free art.

However, I do not intend to enlarge on the point that a real artist is closely bound to his society, to his people, and that it is they who form and define his art. That is an incontestable truth. But sometimes one reads and hears disparaging comments from our foreign colleagues (more often ill-disposed than not) to the effect that artists in the Soviet Union lack freedom, that the element of coercion is very strong in Soviet art (even the word 'dictate' is used), and that we write as we are told and even ordered.

I should like to know, first of all, how an artist, an intellectual who is conversant with the specific and inner complexity of our medium, visualises the scene of our work in practice, the character of that 'coercion' and 'dictation'. What has he in mind? The calls of our Party to write about our times? But are not those calls an expression of the eternal demand of life, the eternal demand of art itself? Aren't they an expression of the inner requirements of every artist, no matter what he is writing about, or what period? Aren't you, foreign colleagues, faced with the same eternal demands? Isn't that what you want? Isn't that what you aspire to?

Perhaps it is the straightforwardness and nakedness of these calls, their universality, that upsets you. I can agree that it is not to everybody's liking. There are artists who neither know how nor care to speak out about their work, their duties and intentions. But that makes no tangible difference.

As for the more concrete and definite calls, such as 'Let us write a book about Moscow', 'Let us depict the heroes of the virgin lands!', I can assure you that each Soviet author has the option to respond or not to respond to them. If we talk about what suits one's ideas and intentions most at a given moment, perhaps a direct call can help one in one way or another. But if you are preoccupied with other subjects and thoughts nobody will disturb you. Go ahead with your work, and everybody will rejoice at your success.

Every direct call is addressed to the various genres, and those various genres approach it each in its own way. For the essayist it is probably easier. But in the delicate and versatile field I am working in—in poetry—the subject is of an exceedingly conventional and relative nature. No one, hardly, will claim that Lermontov's *Sail*, for instance, is a poem about a sail, or that Goethe's *Mountain Tops* is a poem about mountains.

Of course, a genre can be subject to coercion. A skilled professional can write about anything he likes—but such exercises, as a rule, do not justify themselves. We know of cases when poetry tried to solve problems that were far from poetic, assuming the functions of quite different genres. But they turned out to be a complete waste of energy. What we got was rhymed newspaper articles, compositions on a given subject which were neither prized by the reader nor long-lived even when one vulgar critic or another tried to praise them for their topicality. They died a quick death because they were not needed by the people; they did not help them in any way, and could not be recognised as true poetry.

Poetry cannot serve as a response to any event or call if the poet does not feel the urge to respond. Poetry is not a response, it is the cry of the soul, a dictate if you like, but a dictate of the poet's own will.

Even if we were to assume that our poets received orders we should not forget the final result. No one will condemn the portrait of Pope Julius II because it was done by Raphael to order. Or let us recall a less absolute but closer example, the poem *Good!* which Mayakovsky was asked to write for the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. It appears, therefore, that

there are different kinds of orders, so we can approach this question calmly and without prejudice. Do not let us rush to conclusions about our attitude to work done by order; let us rejoice if brilliant and talented works of art result from it.

I loathe poetry that is without passion and feeling. I am against mere description and smooth writing. Verses are not medicine in capsules which, when swallowed, prove neither bitter nor sweet. I detest thoughtless and insipid poetry; and more than anything else, in life as well as in art, I hate deception in all its manifestations. Deception renders art worthless, demoralises it, paves the way for evil.

Poetry is called upon to help men in moments of trial, and not to reiterate truisms where things are clear and easy. It must not shun tragedies—it must help men to live through them. Poetry is not afraid of speaking out about what is bad, just as strong men, convinced of their rightness and believing in the triumph of their ideas, are not afraid to speak out about what is bad.

Some of my poems, dear to me, for which I am responsible with every fibre of my being, have met with varied criticism. They were called gloomy and pessimistic; but I was firmly convinced of my rightness, and they expressed my feelings, my ideas of what was difficult and bitter. But beneath those thoughts was my faith in life and in the strength of men. I kept reprinting those poems in all my collections of verse. My convictions were respected and supported, and taken in account. And it was a great joy for me to see that those were the very verses that had stood the test of time and were included in an anthology of Soviet poetry.

To fight for a great art, to have your own deep and firm convictions and to support them at all times and in every way, to know that comrades will help you in your struggle and that you are right, that you are bound to win—that is what I call freedom of artistic endeavour. I have that freedom; it is the content of my life, and I do not understand or care for any other.

It seems to me that what I have said about myself and on behalf of myself I could have said as well on behalf of my colleagues. If after all I am very subjective, speaking as I do of my own experience, that may be explained by the fact that I am a poet, above all a lyric poet.

And so I have returned to the source of our conversation in London. This time, I believe, it has been concluded. I have told you everything I wanted to. If you read these words and understand, and stop trying to convince us that we are not free and are forced to write what we are told, we can go on with our friendly conversation at length and with mutual respect.

Meanwhile, let me thank you once again for the pleasant time you gave us. I was very glad to meet you. Good night, sir.

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ETHEL VOYNICH AND 'THE GADFLY'

A. Belkin

Few English books have had the strange fate of 'The Gadfly' by Ethel Voynich, seldom read and almost unobtainable in the Britain where it was written, a continuous best-seller in the Soviet Union, where it has inspired a stage version, a film and an opera in recent years. This article surveys a book that seeks to explain this paradox.

EUGENIA TARATUTA'S recent book *Ethel Lilian Voynich** is, in many ways, original, and does not fall into any definite category. This unusual biography of the author of the very popular novel *The Gadfly* goes far beyond the limits of conventional literary biography, and it may be that some critics, nurtured on puritanically strict academic rules, will refuse it the designation of literary criticism.

In fact, Taratuta's book, written in a lively and attractive style accessible to every reader, is a work of genuine research. It took her many years to assemble this astonishing picture of Ethel Voynich from odd fragments and extant letters, scattered memoirs and unpublished archives. Sometimes it is of interest to follow not just the content of the book itself, but how the author gathers the evidence of one contemporary after another, how a thread leads from a name mentioned in a letter to an important fact, and beyond that to some other significant figure of the period.

For Taratuta there is nothing trivial. In her book an apparently trivial fact may reveal interesting traits in the make-up of Ethel Voynich, and even more of the whole epoch.

Maria Konstantinovna Tsebrikova (to quote an example) is well known to historians of Russian social thought. She is less well known to literary historians. At all events, when Taratuta wanted to obtain detailed information about her, only an expert on the Russian revolutionary movement like the late Professor B. P. Kozmin could provide even a partial answer. Taratuta discovered that in the first issue of the magazine *Free Russia*, which Stepnyak-Kravchinsky had begun publishing in London, there were 'Letters to Alexander III' written by Tsebrikova. But what connection, if any, had Tsebrikova with Voynich? Stepnyak was a very close friend of Voynich's in London, and exercised enormous influence on her outlook. Taratuta demonstrates this convincingly. Stepnyak's features, artistically re-worked, were the original model for the Gadfly himself. This is excellently shown by Taratuta. Voynich (still using her maiden name of Bull) worked in the editorial office of *Free Russia*. Taratuta managed to find a letter from Tsebrikova to Lily Bull. It is so significant for an understanding of Tsebrikova's psychology, and at the same time for an understanding of the Narodnik revolutionary movement, that a few excerpts would be in order.

'When I was young, my English friend May M. used to say to me: "You Russians are born to be slaves." I used to reply: "We may be born slaves, but we are not born to be slaves." And I decided to prove this one day. But that was not the true motive of my actions. My true motive was that I owed a debt to my people and would pay that debt by raising my voice in their defence and by giving despotism a moral slap in the face.' Tsebrikova was incarcerated in a tsarist prison. Did Lily Bull know about this? Yes, she did; as it so happened, a report had appeared in *The Times*, which Lily Bull had read. Tsebrikova's letter to Alexander III was reprinted in the leading French

* E. TARATUTA: *Ethel Lilian Voynich: The Fate of a Writer and the Fate of a Book*. Goslitizdat. M.1960. 291 pp.

and English newspapers, and letters from her were received by G. Kennan in America, Georg Brandes in Berlin, P. Lavrov in Paris, and Lily Bull in London. Was there some connection between these people? Taratuta attempts to elucidate this as well.

Voynich's acquaintance with Tsebrikova is just one of many episodes in the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, an example of the foreign connections of the Russian revolutionary *émigrés*.

Scattered through the book are a multitude of previously unknown facts, significant and interesting in themselves, from the history of social thought. What, for example, could be the connection between the English writers Oscar Wilde and Bernard Shaw and the Russian Narodniks? It turns out that Lily met Shaw at Stepnyak's house, where she was a daily visitor; Shaw loved and admired the Russian revolutionary and jokingly called Lily Bull a 'nihilist'. Wilde, too, frequented the house. Russian readers will learn, probably for the first time, that that refined aesthete, author of *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, wrote his first play about the nihilists, and called it *Vera*. Taratuta is convinced that this was in honour of Vera Zasulich, though she brings forward no arguments in support. She knows only that Wilde was interested in Russian revolutionaries, sympathised with Stepnyak, and was attracted to Kropotkin.

In order to show how the various links in Voynich's life are joined together to form a single chain, I will give some illustrations of the author's train of thought.

What is the source in *The Gadfly* of the juxtaposition of the image of the Italian revolutionary and his punishment, the crucifixion of Christ, and the punishment of Russian revolutionary conspirators? Taratuta explains that when Stepnyak-Kravchinsky was in the USA he was going to meet the Russian painter Vereschagin, who was also there. At Vereschagin's exhibition in London his tryptich *Execution* was on show: the first picture shows the crucifixion of Christ, the second the execution of Russian revolutionaries, and the third the shooting of mutinous sepoys by the British in India. Did Lily attend the exhibition? No, at that time she was in Russia; but her sister wrote to her about it. Stepnyak could not have failed to tell her about it as well. Revolutionary sacrifice, the readiness to die for their ideals, was one of the chief traits of Russian revolutionaries. In the minds of many, as was natural at that time, it was clothed in the imagery of Christian martyrdom. Lily was fascinated by the Italian revolutionaries' self-sacrificing service to the cause of freedom. Giuseppe Mazzini had been her hero from childhood. In her youth Lily had also read *The Words of a Believer*, by the French utopian priest Lamener, who taught that the salvation of mankind from oppression and poverty lay in Christian moral purity and ardent faith. It is relevant to add that this book was also well known in Russia, and during the 40s it was read by Petrashevsky. When Lily was in Russia she several times brought messages to her friends imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress. So gradually, step by step, Taratuta reveals to us the whole environment of Lily Bull, all the impressions made on her consciousness; and eventually the history of the writing of *The Gadfly* and the development of its author's outlook become clear to us.

Incidentally, Taratuta gives us in passing a curious fact like the following: Stepnyak presented Samuel Clements (Mark Twain) with his book *Underground Russia*, and received in reply a letter bearing witness to Twain's rapturous admiration of the Russian revolutionaries: 'This is a form of self-sacrifice unknown in any country outside Russia.'

Taratuta has generously besprinkled her book with such interesting facts

whenever they can help in any way to reveal the atmosphere Ethel Voynich breathed.

But perhaps they are all just idle literary fancies. To be convinced that they are all historical facts, read the appendix to the book, nearly 50 pages of close print. The publishers were probably embarrassed by the character of this strange 'appendix'—neither notes nor references to sources, something quite natural in a book of this type; but it was printed, and we can see how relevant and important it is. Here again are facts, quotations from documents, many hitherto unknown, descriptions of researches in the archives, source references—Russian, English, American, Polish (Lily Bull's husband Mikhail Voynich was, indeed, a Polish revolutionary), references to conversations between the author and contemporaries, and finally references to personal letters from Voynich to Taratuta. The only cause for regret is the absence of an index: it would have been extremely useful here.

Taratuta's book, however, is no mere accumulation of facts, however interesting. It has a well-constructed plan, and is full of well-defined ideas. In the preface, speaking of *The Gadfly*, Taratuta writes: 'How, after all, was this book created, whose flame fires hearts after more than half a century, and is not yet extinguished? Why did a book written about Italian revolutionaries by an Englishwoman find its home in Russia?'

The answer given by Taratuta is instructive and topical, even in this day and age. A multitude of international revolutionary threads meet in Voynich's unusual life (which could itself provide the theme of an interesting novel). Until the publication of Taratuta's book we knew almost nothing of it. The wealth of historical material contained in it puts Taratuta's work far beyond the limits of a pure biography. When one reads it, Lenin's idea becomes clearer: 'Thanks to the emigration, due to tsarism, revolutionary Russia possessed in the second half of the 19th century a wealth of international contacts, and a superlative knowledge of the forms and theories of the revolutionary movement on a world scale, such as no other country possessed.'

Ethel Voynich herself made a significant contribution to international freedom-loving ideas. This is proved not merely by her connections with progressive figures in many lands, but also by her activity in the field of translation. She translated Garshin, Saltykov-Shchedrin and many other Russian writers into English. Shchedrin's fairy-tale *The Lost Conscience* she knew by heart. It is interesting to note her admission in a letter to Taratuta in 1956: 'The works of Dostoevsky and Shchedrin made a deep impression on me.'

The life of Ethel Voynich and the history and influence of *The Gadfly* open our eyes in an unusually striking manner to an important truth: ideas, of course, have their place of origin, the soil that nurtured them, but once they have germinated in their native soil they can find a new home wherever corresponding historical conditions exist, and in favourable circumstances they can thrive on new soil in another land.

Taratuta's book is dedicated to the ideals of internationalism. Just consider this astonishing train of events: the daughter of an English mathematician, Lily Bull, was all her life an admirer of the Russian revolutionary populist Stepnyak-Kravchinsky, married a Polish politician, Voynich, carried illegal literature from London to Russia, was renowned for her novel about Italian revolutionaries, and—irony of fate—lived out the end of her life in obscurity in the USA, where only a few years before her death Russians, in fact Soviet journalists then in New York, re-established contact with her. Thus in one private (albeit remarkable) life is revealed an historic connection within the revolutionary movement that stirred the peoples of western Europe as well as of Russia.

The core of Taratuta's book, however, is concerned with the writing of

The Gadfly and an analysis of the novel. This is the first serious attempt in Soviet literary criticism to give an analysis of a novel of unusual popularity, which has educated many generations of Soviet youth in the spirit of dedication to the ideals of revolution and atheism, which has inspired dramatists, film directors and composers to make stage and screen adaptations and operas of it. *The Gadfly*, as Taratuta shows, is permeated with the pathos of fidelity to the ideals of freedom. As an epigraph to the first part of her book, Taratuta chose the words of Walt Whitman that Voynich loved: 'Liberty! Others despair of you! I never despair of you.' As epigraph for the second part she has taken Stepnyak-Kravchinsky's words on the Russian revolutionary populists, 'whose dedication to their cause reached the plane of religious ecstasy without being in itself a religion'. In the middle of the 20th century, in an age when belief and knowledge, religion and science, the historical materialism of the socialist system and the idealist teachings of the bourgeois states have clashed with fresh force in struggle for the spirit of man, the idea of the 'possession' of man by the idea of freedom, of his fidelity to freedom to the end, has taken on deep contemporary significance.

The Gadfly is, in essence, an intellectual novel. Its conflict is defined by the clash of the son, an atheist and lover of freedom, with his father, a fanatical Catholic. The ideological saturation of *The Gadfly* is well demonstrated in Taratuta's researches. In her analysis of the novel, however, there are several important theses with which I cannot agree. Taratuta tries to answer the question of what are the artistic qualities that account for the novel's long and influential life. She writes that there are 'books that lead', 'militant books', and that *The Gadfly* is one. What is peculiar to such books? Taratuta applies the same artistic criteria to them that are applied to books constructed on quite another æsthetic plan; but when she tries to prove that the descriptions of nature and people, as well as the psychological analysis, are as full of realistic mastery as the greatest realistic works of the second half of the 19th century she sounds most unconvincing.

The inconsistency of her approach to questions of artistic merit is clearly revealed in the problem of 'Voynich and Dostoevsky'. The relation of several ideological problems in the novels of Dostoevsky and that of Voynich is correctly presented, but one cannot refrain from emphasising that Voynich's intellectualism, which is romantic and psychological in character, cannot be compared in any with the realistic-philosophical intellectualism of Dostoevsky.

The very comparison of the artistic powers of Dostoevsky and Voynich can only provoke a smile at the thought of the researcher being led uncritically astray by her material. Refuting authors who have noted a certain melodramatic quality in Voynich's hero, Taratuta writes of the 'higher realism' of *The Gadfly*, juxtaposing this with Dostoevsky's dicta concerning the role of the exceptional and the fantastic in his 'higher realism'. Taratuta fails to see that the 'exceptionalness' of Dostoevsky's realism and the romantic 'exceptionalness' of the hero of *The Gadfly* are totally different in character. A certain ecstatic quality discernible in Taratuta's writing, an occasionally over-sentimentality of style, is also apparent in more serious matters—namely in an insufficiently sober analysis of Ethel Voynich's work, which is undeniably gifted.

There are books whose effect is expressed not in the living perfection of their characters, not in the depth of artistic perception of the character's spiritual life, but in other characteristics peculiar to themselves. When the passion of the personal, real life of the author becomes a part of the book, when a book is an integral part of the artist's practical, revolutionary activity, when the reader senses the organic unity of the art and public activity of the author, then a special kind of artistic effect is produced. As Taratuta rightly states,

'the breath of the exploits of the past has touched the present'. Such books, kindled by the breath of their creator's exploits, form a special category in world literature; Taratuta herself names them: Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?*, Giovannioli's *Spartacus*, Stepanyak-Kravchinsky's *Andrei Kozhukhov*, and Ostrovsky's *How the Steel was Tempered*.

The Gadfly also belongs to this group. That is why the analysis of the ideological problems of the novel is by far the most successful and convincing part of the book; the clash between filial and revolutionary feelings; the struggle between religious and atheistic ethics; dedication to an ideal that can conquer death; the heroism of self-abnegation in the name of freedom.

The third part of Taratuta's book, entitled 'The Book Carries On', is extremely instructive. It is full of rich material concerning the subsequent fate of *The Gadfly*. Here are introduced tributes from outstanding figures of the 20th century—writers and scientists, Bolsheviks, both Russian and foreign—who speak of the beneficial effect of the novel on their attitude to life, on the training of their will, character and dedication to an ideal. Here are the names of G. M. Sverdlov, G. M. Krzhizhanovsky, V. Lebedinsky, L. Seifullina, G. Kotovsky, A. Maresiev and many others. This section also reflects the amazing industry of the author, not only in amassing sources, but in managing to obtain the opinions and reminiscences of living contemporaries. There is some interesting information on how, quite recently, Taratuta corresponded with Ethel Voynich, who lived to a great age, dying on July 28, 1960, at the age of 96.

Voynich's last thoughts, in her message of congratulation to Soviet youth in 1956, touchingly echo the spirit of *The Gadfly*: 'Be true to the dreams of your youth. . . . Above all be sincere with yourself.'

Taratuta's book is an excellent education for our Soviet youth. It contains valuable material for historians of revolutionary populism, as well as for literary critics, working at the meeting ground of study of Russian and foreign literature. It is instructive for young researchers because of its method, being meticulous and accurate in its selection of material, and free of hasty generalisations; the author's general judgments are always based on adequate material—the result of unremitting spadework and genuine absorption in her theme.

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(Slightly abridged.)

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SOVIET HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY

Beatrice King

IT is a far cry from higher education in 1920, two years after the revolution, to higher education in 1962—a distance of nearly half a century. During that period there have been many changes and considerable developments. But flexibility has been, and continues to be, a characteristic of every stage and sphere of Soviet education, a flexibility consciously and deliberately applied, and resulting from the strength that stems from a clearly defined goal universally accepted. Thus changes signify that a method right at one stage has ceased to be adequate for a new situation and its new demands; we in Britain should not therefore be misled by their sharp, even brutal, self-criticism into a belief that in the Soviet Union education has failed and is failing to deliver the goods.

It is a paradox deserving some thought that a sweeping reorganisation of Soviet higher education is now in progress, just when Western educationists are awakening to its past achievements and to the need to study it. In the Soviet Union the solid achievement of the past years is taken for granted and forms the foundation for the next stage, but it is necessary to prune away dead wood in order to encourage further growth and development. Anyone who is interested in the pressing problems of higher education in Britain will do well to give the closest attention to what has been done in the Soviet Union not so much in the past as just in this last year.

In numbers alone, the development of higher education in the USSR has been staggering. In 1961 there were 739 institutions with 2,400,000 students; that is 111 students for every 10,000 of the population, twice the proportion in Japan, and 2.8 times that in France. The country now has thousands of trained specialists in every field, and still they do not satisfy the national need either in quantity or quality. The criticism that was levelled against the secondary schools in 1958 (of being out of touch with life) was also levelled at the universities, and provision was made in the Education Act of that year for a reform of higher education as well as of the school system; this reform went far beyond the changes introduced in entrance requirements, which gave priority to applicants with two years working experience.

The country-wide discussions of the past five years that have involved all branches of industry, and the rethinking on methods of economic organisation and planning, and on goals, that led to formulation of the seven-year plan for 1959-65 and the twenty-year plan embodied in the programme of the Communist Party, have stirred up Soviet higher education at all levels. There has been a growing excitement that has not only caught up the younger members of the faculties, but has involved directors of factories, works managers and research workers; and a wave of experiment in the organisation and methods of higher education and its content has swept over the higher education institutions. It is most vividly exemplified in the university of science founded in Novosibirsk under the Siberian Department of the Academy of Sciences. It is also reflected in the wholesale movement of agricultural institutes out of the towns and on to the farms as fast as buildings can be provided. The keynote is the unification of theory and practice. Graduates must have know-how as well as knowledge, and must become creators of the new as well as users of the knowledge already acquired.

Responsibility for higher education has been decentralised to the Union republics; and the training of all specialists and technicians has been united by putting specialised secondary schools under the control of the Ministries of Higher Education.

The new look in Soviet higher education, resulting from the flood of criticisms and proposals for change, was embodied in a new statute for higher educational institutions (issued on March 1, 1961), replacing the regulations adopted in 1938. Promulgation of the new statute was followed by a number of separate measures which combine to change the whole character of Soviet higher education. One was a complete reorganisation of the USSR Academy of Sciences and the system of co-ordinating scientific research, placing on the academy a special responsibility to lead research in the universities and other higher educational institutions. A second measure put increased emphasis on expanding university research as the key to raising the standard of teaching and the qualifications of graduates. The whole sequence was completed with an all-Union conference of higher education held in July 1961, which reviewed the position in all the main fields—university, technical, medical, pedagogical and the arts. The report of the Minister of Higher Education, Professor Elyutin, was self-critical in the extreme: ‘There are still many shortcomings and unsolved problems. . . . We must in every way improve practical training. . . . The first concern of everyone connected with higher education must be to develop the student to be independent, active, able to link theory with practice . . . and this must be done wherever he is and whatever he is engaged on. The schoolmaster attitude must be finished with . . . we have not learned the right way to evaluate and develop the individual creative abilities of the student. Often these abilities do not get sufficient scope for their development. We must find more flexible ways of training cadres . . . the methods of studying science must be improved. There is a continuous accumulation of new facts, while the training period will always be limited to a definite time. It is therefore necessary for professors to show more initiative and creativeness in improving syllabuses and curricula; firmly excluding secondary material. . . . It is time we began assessing the results of higher education not quantitatively nor even just qualitatively—though both are important—but by the actual work done by graduates, by the results that obtain in the development of the national economy, science and culture. This new criterion lays a double responsibility on higher education institutions not only for their own work but for the work of their graduates.’

The Minister’s report was followed by a long discussion. The contributions bring home how nonsensical is the conception fostered in the West of the uniformity of Soviet life and the absence of initiative and variety in education. It would need a book to describe adequately the diversity of approaches to problems and ways of solving them brought out in this discussion. There were many examples of local initiative in higher education, and not only by the universities and colleges, but by factories, collective farms and trade unions.

As in other countries, the obstacles to initiative in the Soviet Union often come from high up—from a Ministry of Education, for example, or some other state department. A case in point was the effort of the Moscow Institute of Constructional Engineering to set up a designing bureau on the students’ initiative; at the time of the conference they had not received approval or a decision from the officials of the Ministry of Higher Education. Long-drawn-out discussion and argument had wasted much time and energy. The students wanted to set the bureau up in the diamond-mining town of Mirny, in Yakutia, as a general technical faculty for training workers for the development of Mirny into a major industrial centre. The Mirny development offers great opportunity for research in the technology of building in Arctic conditions and permafrost. Students for the project had been selected by the Komsomol committee of the institute. There were good engineers available in Mirny, so that only two-thirds of the staff needed would come from Moscow, mainly for mathematics, physics and history. The students also obtained the support

of the Yakutsk regional committee of the Communist Party, but they had not yet overcome the resistance of the Ministry, whose pigeon-holes had engulfed all the documents. Though the incident is not unique, experience shows that it is a minority of initiatives that suffer the same fate.

The conference had before it suggestions that the work of science chairs in universities and institutes should be joined with that of research institutes in the same field. Examples of the kind of co-operation implied were given. Thus the Moscow Physics and Engineering Institute and the Magnitogorsk Institute of Mining and Metallurgy have developed extensive co-operation, with 14 joint research groups in metallurgy, which were working in 1960, on 50 different projects. This Moscow institute had similar associations with research institutes in other fields. Co-operation, it has been found, reduces the cost of research. This was particularly noted in the case of the Kuibyshev Higher Technical Institute, to which a number of industrial research establishments had been handed over during the reorganisation of management. Such co-operation was further urged as a means of facilitating the use of computers, in which the Soviet Union lagged behind both the USA and Britain.

Rabfacs (workers' courses) have been reintroduced as a method of preparing workers for higher education; because today there are no untutored workers, most having completed at least seven-year school, and very many ten-year school, the *rabfac* courses are on a higher level than those of the '20s, and can complete their tasks much more quickly than in the old days, in as short a period as three months.

The Magnitogorsk Institute of Metallurgy, set up at the Magnitogorsk Iron and Steel Works, is an example of the varied ways being employed to train specialists. The staff of the Institute of Metallurgy give active help with the production problem of the works, the professors working on the solution of problems of major importance. In their turn, about 100 staff engineers and technologists from the works combine their production activities with teaching in the institute. Together, works and institute have set up several joint research groups to work on urgent problems facing the works. In this institute a student spends the first two years of the five-and-a-half-year course in the works, studying in the evening three days a week for four hours a day. The following two years and the first half of the fifth year are spent on full-time day study in the institute. The last year is divided between six months pre-diploma production practice in the works and six months preparation of a diploma project. During the first year of work the students work on a variety of sectors in the works. Specialised training begins in the second year after three to five months of general training. As workers, the students are members of a normal works team or group, and become members of the works collective. This working as members of a works group, being influenced by and influencing its aims and purposes, is held to have a beneficial effect on the moulding of the future specialist.

The Leningrad Electro-Technical Institute has introduced an innovation of its own, designed for closer and continuous links between institute and factory. It is strongly recommended to managements to have a scientist cum research engineer from the institute in the factory as a permanent representative of the institute, to advise on problems and to encourage post-graduate research by the staff engineers. In the institute they have organised groups of selected fourth-year students willing and anxious to work on broader engineering problems than those in the official syllabus for their course. In April 1961 there were already 150 students in such groups, following an extended individual study plan. The aim is not only to train people capable of dealing with problems as they arise in the works, but also to guide factory innovators and experimenters to achieve the radical transformation of production demanded

by the future. Three basic fields of training have been planned for these selected students: radio-electronics, automation and computer technique, and electrification and automation. It is compulsory for these students to take part in the research work of the chair at the institute. Their practical work is done in the factory side by side with its regular workers.

Just over half of Soviet students today are extra-mural, and this is becoming the dominant form of higher education. In addition to 30 specialised correspondence and evening institutes, there are 880 extra-mural departments in the universities and colleges. For many years a major problem for extra-mural, particularly correspondence, students was their remoteness from the centre of study. This has been overcome in part by opening extra-mural departments at almost all higher education institutions, and by opening branches of these departments in towns without colleges, or at major factories and construction sites. Thus evening faculties have been opened at the Elektrostal Works, near Moscow, and the Lipetsk Iron and Steel Works; correspondence faculties on the oil fields of the Tatar and Bashkir Autonomous Republics; a general technical faculty in the Arctic mining city of Norilsk; and so on.

Experience of correspondence training of engineers has shown that the students find great difficulty in mastering the general theoretical course of the first three years. It has been found expedient therefore to arrange for more frequent meetings and interviews with tutors in this part of the course than in the senior years. This problem is also being tackled by the setting up of general technical faculties, as a rule under full-time institutes which can give the students both good teachers and well-equipped laboratories, and thus much more personal tuition and supervision. The Ukraine, always to the fore in educational matters, has been particularly successful in this direction. The country has been divided up into regions according to type of industry, and in each region a general technical faculty has been established; altogether there are 58, embracing 70 per cent of the correspondence students in the Ukraine. Being located at the students' place of work, the faculty is able to provide personal teaching and supervision; students attend three evenings a week, and in this way the correspondence student is being brought nearer to the position of the extra-mural evening student.

The reorganisation of higher education applies as much to the arts and humanities faculties as to the technical and scientific. The past few years have brought about a number of changes, for example in the institutes training teachers for the schools. Teaching, as Professor Elyutin said in his report, demands not only a gift but dedication. Whereas formerly there has been a tendency to try for a teacher training institute as the next best thing if efforts to get into a technical institute failed, selection has improved, and the composition of the student body is now better. The requirement of two years' working experience has played a big part here; 41 per cent of the students had now had previous working experience. Training in the institutes has been made more professional; the amount of time devoted to teaching practice has been doubled, and the training of teachers in general technical subjects for the new vocational teaching in the general schools has been introduced. Another forward step has been the opening of departments in the institutes to train teachers for the primary schools, who had previously been trained only at specialised secondary schools giving the equivalent of two years further training.

Great emphasis is being put on improving the scientific training of future teachers; a prerequisite for this, however, is to improve the quality of the teaching staff of the institutes. Here the biggest single drawback is the absence of research facilities in most teacher training institutes, which handicaps the development of the staff.

Student and staff research are felt to be essential to further improvement of all higher education. For many years there have been student scientific circles in universities and institutes, where papers are read on problems and their solutions, work that went well beyond the syllabus. This, however, was voluntary. Now, in addition to encouraging this type of research, there is increasing emphasis on incorporating actual research in the syllabus. This is a fundamental principle in the new university of science in Novosibirsk, where each student works in an academy research institute as well as in the university. To some extent this is the equivalent for science students, who are being trained as future researchers, to the practical factory training of the engineers and the school practice of future teachers. Today over 200,000 full-time students are simultaneously engaged in research, and a special national award for the best student-research is given. In the academic year of 1960-1 1,180 students had work accepted, 50 papers were adjudged worthy of the award; as some of the work was group research, 113 students received medals.

Though Soviet higher education is thoroughly professional or vocational, it does not ignore the fact that students' interests are not limited to their studies. Student amateur circles and general cultural activities are encouraged. In some universities and institutes optional courses of a general cultural character are organised. Here the Donetsk Polytechnical Institute holds a leading position. After many different ways had been tried of involving students and staff, a 'faculty of culture' was instituted by the staff in 1959, providing a two-year course, without a set syllabus and without examinations. The first year was designed 'to open the door to beauty to the student' with the aim of 'enlarging and enriching his spiritual world and developing æsthetic taste'. The methods adopted were those of lecture-concerts, discussions and debates. The absence of a syllabus did not mean an absence of planning, for haphazard activity would not serve the desired purpose. The course was organised in several cycles. In the first year music received the fullest attention, with less time given to literature, graphic art and æsthetics, in that order. Nine lecture-concerts were held, there were two debates on æsthetics and the role of art in a socialist society, as well as lectures on the theatre and on the latest achievements of science. The experience of the first year convinced the staff that they must not limit the course to lectures. A music section and an art section were organised to encourage active participation and performance. The great demand for music was met in a variety of ways through performance as well as appreciation talks, and by lectures on particular works that linked them with the life of the people past and present. Members of the sections now perform not only for themselves, but for fellow students and at workers' clubs.

The students of the Novosibirsk Teacher Training Institute themselves took the initiative in setting up a 'University of Culture'. Most of the students would be going to rural schools; it would, they thought, be no handicap to their teaching of algebra or botany in the village school if they were also active in the village club teaching dancing or singing or acting. So the 'University of Culture' began by teaching the students attending to conduct a choir, to play folk instruments, to sing and to dance (folk dances). They drew their teachers from among the students of the local conservatoire. In 1961 a second 'faculty' was organised for the social and political sciences. Some 20 future teachers joined a class on public speaking. For those who had no talent or inclination for music or public speaking a physical culture section was set up, whose members skate and ski, study coaching and practise boxing and wrestling and light athletics. The 'culture university' rather lost its original meaning. Not the least put out, the students renamed it the 'Institute of Social Professions', and aimed to get every future teacher in the institute to follow one course or another.

DISCUSSIONS AMONG SOVIET ECONOMISTS 1960—1962

R. Bellamy

The author spent a year in 1960-1 in Moscow doing research in economics. In this article he describes some of the discussions among Soviet economists in which he participated and talks he had on different problems of theory and practice with leading Soviet economists.

THIS article attempts to record some impressions of the content and climate of discussion that I formed while engaged in a year's research work in 1960-1 as a guest of the Institute of Economics of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In that Institute (which deals primarily with the economics of socialism) and in its sister Institute of World Economy and International Relations (which, as its name implies, deals with the non-socialist world) I had many formal and informal sessions, as I also had, in a much smaller degree, with some members of the faculty of economics of Moscow University.

First, a word about the 'climate' of discussion. As was pointed out in the speech of Ilyichev at the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party last November, it was perhaps theoretical work in the social sciences which suffered most from the 'cult of the personality' and its accompanying dogmatism. While one would not expect the effects of this to be overcome rapidly, any comparison of the learned journals today with their counterparts of 10 to 15 years ago shows a significant change. Of course, in work done at the empirical level (and this is clear from the journals that deal with the problems of particular industries) the dogmatic features were always less marked. Studies of the capitalist world also show marked improvement. To illustrate: when I opened a discussion myself at the Institute of World Economy on economic developments in post-war Britain, and referred to the growth of parasitic forms of economy in distribution and services, it was refreshing (and salutary) to be reminded that in the Soviet economy too, as its standard of living rose, the share of services was growing and would grow further.

But it would be inadequate, I think, to interpret new developments in the climate of thought solely in terms of a rectification of past attitudes. Rather their cause is the emergence of new problems, or at least of problems that were less important in the earlier period of the pre-war five-year plans. Two have loomed especially large. The first, dating partly from an earlier period, concerns the rationality of investment projects; the other (and of later date) concerns pricing policy and the law of value. What has happened here, it seems to me, is not, as some Western writers assert, a belated discovery of the truths of 'marginalism'. It is, of course, true that in these discussions there has been frequent reference to a maximising principle, reflected in propositions which speak of 'producing a given output with the minimum direct and indirect labour cost'. But the maximising principle is the formal shell, not the kernel, of 'marginalism'. What is involved here rather is that a more accurate evaluation of 'social costs' (usually expressed in the phrase 'national economic costs') should be made in comparing alternative allocations of economic resources, and that prices, in terms of which the resources are measured, must therefore accurately reflect costs. In the 1930s the method of planning might be described (at the risk of some over-simplification) as driving forward vigorously on a limited number of fronts, and achieving key targets

there. It is not that costs were ignored, but that the costs of failure to develop collectivisation, heavy industry and defence were infinite, in the sense that the survival of socialism or its overthrow from outside were at stake. Moreover, nice calculations of costs were simply not possible with the personnel and planning apparatus then available. With the end of the reconstruction period in 1950 new factors began to come into operation. First, the people and the means now existed to make more effective calculations of real social cost and to reflect them in prices and in methods of planning. Second, a decade in which investment had been mainly the rebuilding of a war-damaged capital stock gave way to a vista of immense capital investments embodying a rapid rate of technical progress. Hence calculation of the efficiency of projects assumed greater urgency. Third, with the ending of the American advantage in the arms race, the crucial question in the struggle for peace was seen as the rate at which the socialist world (and the USSR in particular) could overtake the capitalist world, first in absolute output and then in output per head. While, therefore, certain investment projects with a long gestation period might in the end produce output more cheaply, the timing of output as well as its costs had to be considered. Further, the locking up of resources today in long-maturing projects could well mean missing the chances offered by tomorrow's more advanced techniques. Fourth, the centralisation of decision-taking which had performed an essential role in the 1930s, the war and the reconstruction period was now found to be hampering initiative; thus the management reforms of 1957 aimed to liberate the initiative of the plentiful supply of skilled personnel becoming available. Clearly also, further industrialisation on the basis of new techniques, in particular the growth of a large petrochemical and plastics industry, involves changes in the structure of investment and of the labour force. (Here Soviet economists are not too proud to study the experience of the USA. One paper I heard dealt with the changing composition of US investment during industrial and technical development since the war; an examination was also being made of the structure of the American labour force under the same circumstances.) As illustrative of the weight given to social cost I cite the discussion I heard on a paper delivered by an economist from the Fuel Institute. Geological prospecting and deep-boring techniques have of recent years given the USSR abundant supplies of oil and natural gas, so that there has been a shift in the fuel balance, a shift towards those newer forms of fuel as against coal. Some participants in the discussion argued that the comparative cheapness of gas and oil was exaggerated by the incomplete inclusion of the (high) costs of exploration (borne in part by ministries other than fuel), so that the oil and gas prices reflected only the sectoral (or, as would be said under capitalist conditions, the 'private') costs to one particular industry, and not the costs to society as a whole.

This is some of the background to these two discussions. That on investment had, by 1958, reached a certain stage of finalisation (or at least of compromise on a better basis than hitherto) and its fruits were embodied in the 'Standard Methods for Determining Investment Projects' at the planning level. But it is by no means over. In the price and value discussion it is harder to see what stage has been reached. There is an as yet unresolved difference between those, on the one side, who think that some charge for capital (other than depreciation) should be levied as part of the cost of all goods, including capital goods, and others, of whom a leading member is Professor Turetsky, who advocate keeping these charges, as hitherto, only on consumption goods. The manner of conducting this discussion is sometimes a little talmudic; but one's impatience for results might well be tempered by the thought that market economies existed for a very long time before a rigorous and formally

satisfactory theory of value emerged, and even longer before the development of an adequate theory of growth.

The transfer of much decision-taking from central Gosplan to Sovnarkhoz level, and some from there to the level of the enterprise, has undoubtedly stimulated initiative; but it has also raised new problems. One is that which emerges once the two (or more) successive stages of a production process come under the control of two (or more) separate authorities (the problem of inter-branch and inter-regional links). But more important is the whole new literature and discussion about the problems of the enterprise, and about the development of effective economic, as distinct from administrative, levers to steer the enterprise into producing the correct assortment as well as quantity of output, and into economising resources by the fulfilment of its productivity plan.

This is the appropriate moment to bring in the application of mathematics in Soviet economics; for it is here, and not only in relation to problems of the enterprise, that the most interesting developments are taking place. The four main applications of mathematics used by Western economists have been econometrics, the 'theory of games', linear programming, and input-output analysis.

Econometrics has been concerned with the quantitative formulation of economic laws by use of statistical techniques, in the attempt to predict future movements accurately from past movements. Inasmuch as future movement of many magnitudes in the planned economy is not a question of prediction but of control, econometrics has less relevance there than in capitalist economies. It seems, for example, to have little relevance to capital investment, to the output of raw materials, and to the overall output of consumption goods. But it does have some applicability in a money economy to the prediction of the future structure of consumer expenditure. In the socialist world as a whole there have been in the last few years econometric studies of consumer demand under conditions of increasing income. Consumption, however, is not, under socialism, something only to be predicted, but something to be discussed and planned as a matter of social policy (as one hopes smoking is here !). I had discussions with Mstislavsky, whose book on consumption under socialism appeared in 1961; they showed that there is considerable research both among economists and in the medical sections of the Academy in order to evaluate more accurately the objective needs of human beings under conditions of the advance to communism.

Linear programming, as a matter of mathematical technique, was originated in 1939 by the Leningrad mathematician Kantorovich, but, partly for reasons of dogmatism, was little developed in the USSR. It is in essence a technique for finding the optimal ways of using resources in pursuit of given ends. It has been used in Britain and the USA in large-scale enterprises, and clearly has application in similar enterprises in the USSR as well. A first work (a translation from the Czech) appearing early in 1961 has been succeeded by a fairly rapid flow of books about linear programming in general and in particular about the application of computers to it. The most famous American works have also appeared in Russian translation.

Input-output analysis in some form has been in use in the USSR ever since the famous Control Figures of 1923; they, in fact, formed the first input-output table. In its simplest form input-output analysis is a method of expressing necessary relationships between the output (or changes in the output) of some particular commodity and the required outputs (or changes in output) of all the other industries whose products go into making it. The well-known technique of 'material-balances' is an example of its application, and the 'law of balanced proportions', so familiar in Soviet economic writing,

expresses the basic idea behind it. The formal mathematical apparatus for a stationary economy, and much more sketchily for a growing economy, has been highly elaborated in the USA, far beyond, in this writer's view, all possibility of its application in an economy where the relationships in question are not technological but appear as the products of spontaneous market forces.

An interesting discussion with Professor Boyarsky, head of the statistics department of the Economics Faculty of Moscow University, confirmed impressions already derived from journals, that there is a wide range of attitudes towards the application of mathematics, from conservatism at one end of the spectrum to uncritical acceptance at the other. Some appear ready to take over, hook, line and sinker, all the work done in the capitalist countries; some think, or have decided without much investigation, that mathematics has little application to Soviet economics. The largest section, that in the middle, is concerned with a critical appraisal of work done in the West and with the independent elaboration of quantitative methods, within a framework of Marxist concepts and as applicable to Soviet planning practice. Boyarsky suggested also that in his view there was not much scope ('for our military men perhaps, but not for our economists') for the application to a socialist society of a theory based on the assumption of irreconcilable antagonism.

In Dr. Boyarsky's own department (the same is also true in Leningrad, and is beginning elsewhere) all economics students are being given a basic grounding in mathematics at first-year level. Boyarsky's own textbook *Mathematics for Economists* is much more about mathematics and much less about economics than similar textbooks in the West. Fifth (final) year students return to mathematical analysis in the concrete form of linear programming and input-output analysis with a little, but not much, econometrics. Interestingly enough, they have, at any rate up to now, much the same difficulties in the first year of this subject as are common among British students (who rarely receive the same amount of compulsory maths), and by the fifth year they tend to have forgotten a great deal. Clearly more attention and experiment is going to be devoted to this problem.

It seems that most of the work in this field was done in Leningrad, and later in the Siberian branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences at Novosibirsk, rather than in Moscow. In the Institute of Economics itself there existed in 1961 the mathematical-economic research laboratory of Academician Nemchinov, and just as I left the formation was announced of a new mathematical section of the Institute under the direction of Mstislavsky. There is general recognition that much leeway has to be made up; but the practical gains for planning are immense, which means that resources for this work will not be lacking, and Soviet mathematics is hardly lower than the front rank of world mathematics, so that once new people (as well as some old) get their teeth into this problem there should be big advances. At least one knows that the American translators are extending their scope to cover more journals from eastern Europe. The increase in academic exchange can only be fruitful to both sides.

NEW TASKS AND NEW METHODS

FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHING
AT VORONEZH UNIVERSITY

G. E. Vedel, A. P. Starkov, A. C. Shklyaeva

THE decree of the Soviet of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics 'On Improving Foreign Language Teaching' postulates that the whole system of foreign language teaching in secondary schools and colleges should be fundamentally reorganised, and all the necessary premises for this created.*

The demands of the advance of science and technology, the Soviet Union's ever-growing international connections, the increase in the exchange of delegations, students and scientists, the growth of cultural links—all make it imperative for every Soviet specialist to have a working knowledge of at least one foreign language; and he needs not only to be able to make use of foreign literature in his field (that is, to read and translate it), but also to know the language properly (that is, to be able to speak it).

Despite the fact that in all Party and Government decrees on the subject of foreign language teaching the task of teaching the language 'properly' in most cases is postulated, the syllabuses (in both schools and universities) have been aimed by the teachers and others involved at the reading and translating of foreign texts, wholly ignoring the spoken word. And although there is a reference in some programmes to 'constructing' answers to questions, it is preceded by such demands in the sphere of reading and translation that there is simply no time left for practical conversation either in the school or in the university. Even the latest syllabus, approved in 1960, though it did pose the task of developing in students 'basic habits of oral speech', did not 'push' it as much as it might have done, and left no time for developing familiarity with the spoken language. Instead of deeds we got, in practice, declarations.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the teachers of Voronezh University, as in other universities, have hitherto been orientated towards teaching students reading and translation with a dictionary, from texts with subject matter corresponding to the future specialisation of students.

The modern language chairs of the university have in recent years had some success in giving students practice in translation, but this experience did not extend to the spoken word, and naturally was quickly lost. As a consequence final-year students, as at many other universities, cannot in practice use the knowledge gained in a foreign language.

Realising the necessity to reorganise modern language teaching, the German and English departments in September 1960 began, with the approval of the governing body and the university's Party organisation, experimental oral teaching with a number of groups of students. For this purpose one group each was formed in the philosophy, chemistry, biology and other faculties. After a few months it became clear that the students in these groups showed great interest in studying the foreign language and had a better grasp of it than the students studying it mainly by translation and grammar.

A number of difficulties also became apparent which hampered realisation of our aim. Experience showed that success in teaching the spoken word depended on really improving the linguistic training of the lecturers themselves. It also depended on increasing the number of hours set aside for the study of modern languages; on working out special methods for teaching oral

* See *SCR Education Bulletin*, 1961, No. 3-4, 3/-.

speech; on having new textbooks and teaching aids; and on introducing visual techniques widely in the teaching process.

RAISING THE STANDARD OF TEACHERS

SEMINARS of various types were organised to improve the linguistic and teaching standards of lecturers. Very effective was a seminar for teachers of German, in which, during the first six months, they discussed (in German, of course) the works of German writers, and had lectures on the theory of language recorded on tape by a specialist in the German Democratic Republic. The seminars in the English and French departments were concerned with questions of phonetics and teaching method.

The teaching standard of lecturers was also improved by wide attendance at each other's classes and by holding open classes followed by discussion of them, etc. Lecturers in all the language departments also mastered the use of sound apparatus.

We consider that a grounding in oral speech must be laid in the first three years, on the basis of which ability to read and understand socio-political and specialised texts will be developed and perfected. All practical experience confirms that these aims cannot be separated. Teaching translation without at the same time developing oral speech does not even ensure mastery of the technique of translation with a dictionary; while those who have mastered oral speech can easily read and understand texts in their field, make abstracts, and translate.

All this prepared the ground for a change-over to a new way of working.

MORE TIME FOR STUDY

IN our opinion, university study of modern languages should pursue the following aims: to teach students to talk on everyday and social and political themes and on general subjects in their speciality; to read and understand literature on social and political questions and in their own field; to make abstracts and to translate.

To achieve this the number of hours envisaged in the time-table is insufficient. At present this time is allocated differently in the different faculties, and varies from two to six periods a week. The language departments took it up with the governing body, requesting a better apportionment; our point was met, and greatly improved conditions resulted.

In the majority of faculties, six periods a week were accepted for the first, second and third years, and two periods for the fourth year. It was proposed to give fifth-year students tutorials on the specialist literature (in the foreign language) they were using on their diploma projects.

Language students and historians, who need a broader vocabulary, were allocated eight study periods per week in the first three years, and four periods in the fourth year. Two periods a week were provided for group tutorials in the fifth year.

Knowledge is tested by means of term tests in the first, third, fifth and seventh semesters, with examinations in the second, fourth and sixth semesters and a course examination in the eighth. Those who successfully pass the annual examinations and the course examination are put up for the state examination in the foreign language, the results of which are recorded on their diplomas.

We have abolished translation homework as an ineffective method involving a great deal of time and not giving any perceptible practical results.

The reorganisation began in March 1961. In view of the fact that the

existing textbooks did not measure up to the tasks proposed, lecturers selected the teaching material needed and supplied the appropriate treatment. This material was then duplicated. We endeavoured to ensure that it would not only be good from the point of view of teaching the language itself, but would also play a general educational role.

The first results were obtained at the end of the academic year when the students took their examinations. They were given an unseen text to re-tell in their own words and to talk about, a conversation on one of the themes studied during the term, and an item to translate, about 100 to 120 words long, from the original literature in their special field (for the preparation of which they were given 15 minutes). The results showed that the students of the experimental groups easily coped with the translation, while the students who had been studying grammar and translation during the year experienced real difficulty in the examination, as they had not quite mastered the spoken word.

TEACHING METHODS

A NEW aim in teaching requires new methods and new ways of working. The grammar-translation method of teaching languages is not appropriate to our new tasks.

Our work is built up on the following basic methodological principles: oral teaching methods are used to develop oral speech; the ability to read texts with understanding must be developed on this basis, as well as the ability to make abstracts and to translate socio-political and specialised texts. In other words, the effectiveness of teaching is assured not by studying grammatical rules and constructing sentences in connection with them, but by the students mastering typical grammatical structures in the course of oral conversation, i.e. typical sentences. No work is done on isolated words in sentences, and vocabulary units (words, word combinations, expressions and phrases) are mastered in natural linguistic situations. In this way the sentence is taken as the unit of speech. The following sentence can serve as the simplest example of grammatical structure:

The (book) is (on) the (table); (Das Buch) (liegt) (auf) (dem Tisch); (Le livre) est (sur) (la table).

By substituting other meaningful words for those in brackets we get new sentences by analogy in a definite phonetic-intonational setting that is completely natural to the language being studied.

Having mastered definite grammatical structures in the course of conversation, the students acquire new vocabulary by analogy and by substitution in these structures; usually a series of question-and-answer exercises are used for this, corresponding as closely as possible to colloquial speech. Generalisations in the form of rules and commentary are made on the basis of the linguistic material established in oral speech.

Audio-visual aids have a very important place in language work: (a) sound (the teacher's live speech, and recordings); (b) visual aids (physical objects, pictures, filmstrips and films). All these make the student more active and gradually help him to begin thinking in the foreign language.

EQUIPMENT

TAPE-RECORDER equipment is exceptionally important in teaching oral speech.

A time and motion study of the speech of students during classroom periods in language colleges, where the time devoted to language study was

22 periods a week, has shown that the students themselves actually spoke only from five to fourteen minutes a week in the foreign language*. Yet it is quite obvious that it is only possible to learn to speak in the process of speaking, and that it is impossible to substitute any other form of activity for it. The time spent on developing oral speech in students is too little, but to increase it substantially would require a great deal more time than is in fact practicable. This is where the tape recorder comes in.

Voronezh University has built a phonetic studio with three large laboratories with 130 work-places linked to a single common apparatus. The purpose of the laboratories is to develop oral speech habits.

Each laboratory is fitted with cubicles of two types, single and double; each cubicle is equipped with tape recorder, microphone and headphones, and connected to the apparatus through the lecturer's control panel. The student carries out more than 20 types of work in the cubicle. First-year students are able to perform the following: listen to a set text and repeat it in the interval allowed; simultaneously read a text and record their speech on tape, then listen to and analyse the recording; listen to the questions of a reader and answer them, recording questions and answers on tape, then analysing the recording; re-tell a set text first without recording, then record it and subsequently play it back.

All this work may be done many times by a student until he achieves the standard required.

The next group of tasks is intended for both third- and fourth-year students and the junior years, with the difference that it is basically practice for the senior years, while it supplements the work outlined above for the first and second years. It takes the form of (a) reproduction of a prepared conversation on a given theme, recording it on tape, then listening carefully to the recording and analysing it; (b) description of a picture with subsequent analysis of the tape recording of the description; (c) recording of a commentary for a film-strip, or separate pictures of a filmstrip, with analysis of the recording; (d) recording of a commentary for an educational film; (e) taking down dictation at normal speed with a familiar vocabulary on a new subject from a tape recording; (f) exercises on the use of specific word-groups in sentences and situations (recording the exercises on tape and analysing the recording); (g) exercises in situations requiring specific grammatical phenomena, with subsequent analysis of the recording; and other exercises.

The tape-recorder equipment plays a very important role in these studies: it multiplies the amount of time that students spend on oral conversation and helps them to acquire oral speech habits.

Among the kinds of work where technical means are effectively used for study purposes we can also number: prepared conversation on a theme; description of pictures, on a prepared theme for the first year and without preparation for the second and third; making commentaries for filmstrips and educational films; questions on home reading (content, problems, description of the main characters, etc.); re-telling of a text heard in the lecture room, and so on.

All these types of work are done under the supervision of a teacher using the control panel.

Every month on average each student does one piece of laboratory work on the themes set for study for that month. Language students in the Romance and Germanic language departments each do one piece of laboratory work

* G. E. Vedel: *The Significance of the Use of Technical Aids for Teaching Oral Speech in a Foreign Language*. Proceedings of the Gorki State Pedagogical Institute of Foreign Languages, Vol. XIX, 1961 (in Russian).

per week. The laboratory work plays a dual role: the material being studied is more effectively mastered orally in this way, and at the same time it serves as an effective form of control.

The laboratory work is carried out by means of the grammatical structures being studied and of oral exercises and pictures and texts on specific themes. The work is made up as follows: the student is given a series of oral exercises recorded on tape; it is suggested that he answers questions, puts questions, re-tells the theme in his own words, and carries on a conversation with a friend. The time allowed for doing most of the exercises is limited, and the students are not allowed to use notes or text; all the work is carried out orally. Dictation exercises are recorded on the tape as well as the student's answers.

Students work independently in the laboratory, either on assignments under the supervision of a teacher or without supervision after lectures. The work done is listened to and checked by a teacher, and is considered satisfactory if there are no mistakes in it; otherwise it is done again. Experience has shown the immense effectiveness of this laboratory work; each student should give it not less than 50 per cent of the time allocated in the time-table to foreign language study. The student's work is timed by laboratory assistants and noted down on individual report cards.

Film projectors are equally important. Each laboratory is equipped with a filmstrip projector and a cine projector. In addition there is a special film theatre equipped with 35mm. apparatus, where feature and documentary films in French, German and English are shown as well as teaching films. We have also set up our own experimental film studio to produce filmstrips and teaching films; it is producing visual aids and filmstrips for the schools of the Voronezh Region as well.

It seems to us that it is now time to generalise our experience of using audio-visual aids in language-teaching in secondary and higher schools, and we have organised a special methodological laboratory for this purpose, based on our speech laboratories and experimental film studio.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR WORK

EXTRA-CURRICULAR work has a significant place in the system of language teaching. Last year our departments, together with the student organisations, prepared and held three foreign language evenings. The programmes consisted of scenes from German and French classical plays, English, French and German folk songs, recitations and musical numbers, games and raffles.

The conversation circles, drama circles, English choir and French club enjoy great popularity. Wall newspapers in French, German and English are published by the departments.

An excellent tradition has become established among the students of holding competitions for the best mastery of oral speech in a foreign language. Many did well in this year's competition, and 38 students passed the second round. To encourage this the winners were given a grant for the year or their grant was increased, irrespective of their financial position.

LINKS WITH SCHOOLS

WE consider links with the secondary schools one of the most important parts of our work, and the language departments have established close ties with the Regional and City Education Departments, the Regional Institute of Education, the sector on method of the School Board of the South-Western Railway, and the teachers' organisations on teaching method in Voronezh.

The English department has worked out new teaching methods and tested them in practice; the experimental work is being carried out in school No. 28 in Voronezh. For a year, G. V. Starkova, a lecturer in the department, has been working with the fifth class there, where the pupils are learning oral speech in normal conditions, using the method and textbook prepared by the department. More than 25 teachers have visited this class and have formed a high opinion of the results.

The German department has written a new school textbook. Part of it was printed at the university itself, and has been used successfully with illustrative photographs by teachers in the schools. The French department has studied the state of language teaching in the city schools and has outlined concrete measures to help the teachers.

On the initiative of the university language departments the City Education Department has set up an institute of voluntary modern language inspectors. A number of university teachers are studying the teaching of languages in the city schools, visiting the city districts and giving help on the spot to teachers. At the beginning of 1961 we held a conference on reorganising language teaching in Voronezh schools, and took an active part in joint conferences and city conferences of teachers on teaching method, and in zonal conferences of the heads of language departments of institutes of education.

During the school year our departments organised a regional competition for school-leavers for the best mastery of oral speech in a foreign language. The competition was held in two rounds. The first took place in the schools; winners came to the university for the second round. It was on a mass scale; 36 pupils (including six from rural schools), out of 112 participants, passed the second round and received certificates and prizes. The competition helped to popularise language study among the youth of the region.

RESEARCH WORK

THE university language departments are directing their research and work on method towards solution of the problems of modern language teaching in school and college and towards compiling textbooks and teaching aids.

All our work is being carried out jointly, by the departments, with co-ordination of the efforts of the departments, and constant exchange of the experience accumulated. In May 1961 a joint session of the departments was held, at which were discussed the principles for the selection of and method of using grammatical structures. In the summer of 1962 we propose to call an inter-college conference on method in Voronezh to generalise the experience of reorganising language teaching in the secondary schools and higher education in accordance with the decree of the Council of Ministers.

We have thus created the premises for successfully carrying out the pledge we took, in honour of the 22nd Congress of the Communist Party, to train specialists who can speak a foreign language and use the foreign literature in their special fields.

Vestnik vysshei shkoly, 1961, No. 9.

Translated by H.E.

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Surveys and Reviews

PAVLOV IN PSYCHIATRY

Brian H. Kirman

IT is now more than a quarter of a century since Pavlov's death. His revolutionary discovery of the role of conditioned reflexes in our lives was announced some 60 years ago. Like many other great men, Pavlov was in advance of his times, and it is only now that the great heritage which he left to us is being developed. There has of recent years been a sharp change in the orientation of American and British psychology towards conditioning. This change has been less apparent in clinical psychology where psycho-analytical ideas held sway for many years. However, in this sphere, too, increasing use is now being made of a Pavlovian and scientific approach.

The publication in English of a new volume* of some of Pavlov's works is therefore highly appropriate at the present time. The excellent Anrep translation has long been out of print and scholars have been sorely handicapped by lack of ready access to the original material. While the material in the new volume is specifically selected for its relevance to psychiatry the editors have, fortunately, interpreted their brief freely. They are Professor Y. Popov, joint author with Kerbikov and Snezhnevsky of the standard text of Soviet psychiatry, and Professor L. Rokhlin, known to English readers for his compact little volume on the same subject. Professor Popov has added a chapter showing the current application of Pavlovian work to psychiatry, while Professor Rokhlin's contribution deals with the Pavlovian concept of schizophrenia.

Pavlov spent most of his working life in the physiological laboratory. His excursions into the clinic were rare, and occurred for the most part in the latter years of his life. However, his animal work has profound significance for the whole of psychology, including applied human psychology. Pavlov's findings are basic to most contemporary views on learning, and it is now recognised that much of the behaviour of the neurotic patient may be best described as 'learned behaviour'. The concept is that the neurotic has learned to behave, to react to a certain situation, in an unusual or pathological manner. He may therefore be said to have developed conditioned reflexes which, unlike the majority of conditioned responses, are inappropriate to the environment and society in which he lives. An example is that of the housewife who developed an incapacitating phobia of cats, which might be appropriate for tigers but is out of place in regard to the domestic pet. She was cured of her phobia by the progressive application to her of stimuli connected with cats, e.g. pictures, models, fur, etc. Since none of these stimuli was followed by any unpleasant experience they led to the phenomenon described by Pavlov as 'internal inhibition'. This implies that a conditioned response gradually disappears if it is not succeeded by an appropriate reinforcement. Thus an animal will salivate in response to a bell if the bell is regularly followed by feeding. The patient mentioned above was successfully cured by treatment based on Pavlovian principles, the hallmark of success being her adoption of a pet kitten, of which she became very fond.

* PAVLOV, I. P. *Psychopathology and Psychiatry*, FLPH, Moscow. 543pp. Obtainable from Central Books, 21/-

The above example is taken from the *British Medical Journal* and illustrates the permeation of Pavlovian techniques into British psychiatric practice. Similar examples can be found in the literature of many countries. Thus, while many have questioned the applicability of Pavlov's work on animals to humans, its relevance is now generally recognised. As Pavlov pointed out, the action of the human brain is subject to the basic laws which govern all conditioning, and in addition to new, qualitatively different laws which are peculiar to humans. He considered the main new feature in humans to be the development of speech, which he characterised as the 'second signalling system'. He divided the stimuli impinging on the individual into three groups. The unconditioned stimulus is exemplified by food placed in the mouth, which produces salivation and sucking in the baby. The second group consists of conditioned stimuli, e.g. the sight of food or the sound of a bell regularly rung before the giving of food. The third group consists of words which abstract the signals in the second group and are also regarded as conditioned stimuli of the second order. Thus, for the hungry person the words 'Dinner is ready' may produce salivation in much the same way as the exhibition of food to a dog or the sounding of a bell in a suitably conditioned animal.

The first paper in the present volume was delivered in 1903 at the international medical congress in Madrid. Pavlov was then already 54 years old, and was recognised throughout the world as a brilliant physiologist on the basis of his work on the nervous control of the circulation and of digestion. This paper was the first to draft the new theory which was to be Pavlov's major contribution to science. Like Darwin's *Origin of Species*, which was written at the age of 50, it rested on the basis of a lifetime of scientific activity and careful observation of facts. The paper is in fact an eloquent plea for a factual and scientific investigation of the phenomena of animal psychology, which was at that time much overlaid with anthropomorphic and subjective notions. Pavlov begins by saying: 'Regarding the language of facts as the most eloquent, I shall take the liberty of proceeding directly to the experimental material . . .'

In dealing with the difficulties of the subjective approach Pavlov states: 'Is not the eternal sorrow of life the fact that in most cases human beings do not understand each other and cannot enter into the inner state of the other?' Pavlov's avowed purpose, then, was to endeavour to clarify the basic laws of psychology applicable to animals such as the dog, and then to see to what extent these would throw light among more specifically human and clinical problems. Although the present volume is by no means exhaustive it gives some of the fruit of many years of painstaking work. In the later period of his work Pavlov considered that experiments in which the brain was damaged were of limited value and that it was particularly important to work with the intact animal. For the most part he used the salivary glands as a most delicate and measurable indicator of the response to stimuli. His successors, notably Kupalov, have been concerned with the free animal and with the motor response.

It is perhaps the fact that Pavlov concentrated on particular aspects of responses to stimuli that has led many workers to believe that he was solely concerned with limited and primitive types of reaction, and, in particular, that he was not interested in the emotional response. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Pavlov showed that conditioning is a system of infinite complexity and delicacy which can produce an almost incredible degree of adjustment to the environment. If his basic findings are accepted, all the facts of psychology can be included within this framework.

This new volume gives access to much source material for psychologists, clinicians, teachers and others interested. It is not to be expected that material much of which is now over half a century old will use contemporary terms,

and some of Pavlov's later psychiatric speculation may seem a trifle naïve. There are, however, many valuable ideas and experimental findings which have never been exploited. Very valuable also would be the simple repetition of much of the early work, with the assistance of modern technique. Pavlov conceived at one point of the efferent apparatus as passive, but Pavlovian technique could now be cross-fertilised with the modern dialectic concept of continual interaction between input and output, and notion of self-regulation derived from the cybernetic model.

It is, however, to Pavlov that we owe the first extensive exploration of the complex of dynamic systems of temporary or conditioned reflexes built up in the brain and their delicate interaction. Most important for psychiatry is, for example, his notion of the 'morbific' stimulus. By this he means a particular stimulus which produces an abnormal or grossly exaggerated response. An example was provided by the exhibition of water to dogs which had survived the Leningrad flood. Pavlov says: 'The moment you touch the point of application of the morbid stimulus, not only is the reaction to it distorted in one degree or another, but thereafter the entire system of conditioned reflexes becomes deranged and its harmful effect spreads over the whole cerebral cortex.' Thus, neurotic animals with an exaggerated response to water could be upset by the sight of it to such an extent that their normal habits in regard to feeding, sleeping, excretion and reproduction would also be disturbed.

It is to be hoped that this volume will encourage the further development of Pavlovian work in English-speaking countries.

RUSSIAN GRAMMAR

A. G. Waring

MR. HAYWOOD'S grammar *A Second Russian Book* follows on his *First Russian Book* and is also, as he admits in his preface, a second bite at the cherry: 'In addition to new material, much of the grammar dealt with in *A First Russian Book* is reintroduced and treated in greater detail.' This is good, for his first book was badly received on account of errors in the Russian which made it rather unsafe for beginners. Moreover, an attempt to infuse a deal of English schoolboy humour into the texts led him down paths of whimsicality and, inevitably, un-Russianness. All this was very lamentable because Mr. Haywood has unrivalled experience of teaching Russian in schools and his book was otherwise a serious approximation to the standard school textbooks of other languages, admirably suited in the traditional style for use in class.

His texts in the new book are very much more mature and interesting, being composed half of an account of a journey to Russia and impressions thereof, half from adapted extracts out of Soviet readers. He has also taken out insurance against sheer wrong Russian, in addition to drawing considerably on original sources, by having his book looked over by native Russians. Despite great improvement, there remains, however, a residual Britishness, particularly in the early chapters (an impression confirmed by native Russians). Perhaps one is expecting too much from a book intended to teach a complex language to the rigid requirements of 'O' level while—here Mr. Haywood's approach is entirely praiseworthy—being as interesting as possible. The fact

A Second Russian Book, by A. Haywood (Harrap, 271pp. illus., 12/-); *Russian Through Reading*, by K. Brooke and J. Forsyth (Hutchinson, 344pp., illus., 30/-); *Exercises in Russian Syntax*, translation of a Soviet book by seven authors by V. Korotky, edited by R. Dixon (FLPH. 250pp., 10/-; obtainable from Collets).

is that few apart from Mr. Haywood have attempted to give substance to the pious hope that Russian will become a regular school subject, and if it does his *Second Russian Book* may well take an uncontested place among the standard textbooks of French, Spanish, etc., which, as is well known, represent living languages variously trimmed to examination requirements.

* * *

PROFESSOR BROOKE'S and Mr. Forsythe's *Russian Through Reading* may, at 30/-, be priced out of common use. Moreover, it must stand or fall to a large extent on its aims, for it is a 'method' book: it sets out to give beginners, including those who have never studied languages, a reading, as opposed to writing and speaking, knowledge of Russian by integrating text and grammar in the form of passages with copious notes, vocabulary, translation and explanations.

Whatever the intrinsic merits of this avowedly unilateral approach—these only time and the sales receipts will tell—as exemplified in this book it has some obvious drawbacks, the first being the amount of space devoted to explanations. It is not so much the authors' belief in 'saying everything three times over in different ways'; this perhaps is a legitimate part of the method. Rather it is that it reads like lecture-notes taken by a robot-student including everything, even the lecturer's time-honoured jokes. In fields of life in which history is made the spoken word is timeless; in the scholastic sphere it tends merely to the ephemeral. Worst of all is the apologetic manner—learning Russian, even in the painless way the authors claim to offer, will never rival quiz games or crosswords, so why attempt to attract readers by statements like the following: 'If you like spotting differences, picking up clues, and making deductions, we think that you will find much to entertain as well as instruct you in this book'? As early as the second reading passage occurs an admission symptomatic of a fundamental weakness: 'It will be easier and quicker here if we make a statement about Russian grammar, rather than rely on pure deduction.' This principle could have been applied generally with profit and economy. Instead, rigid adherence to a popularizing scheme, together with the extensive nature inherent in the method and the fact that grammar is never allowed to rise above the text, has kept the specific weight of grammatical information rather low for a book of this size. The verb aspect especially—much the most difficult part of Russian grammar—is particularly thin.

Yet it is in many ways a very good book. Its underlying theme—that in a given time the beginner will benefit most from acquisition of vocabulary and basic constructions—unfortunately comes out only in muted tones. It is, however, precisely in this that the book is commendable. The Russian material has been admirably chosen. It is rich, sensitive and redolent of contemporary Soviet life. As such, the book will, one hopes, transcend the authors' self-imposed limitations.

* * *

THE third book—*Exercises in Russian Syntax*—is not at all controversial and can be given an unqualified welcome. The prospective buyer should not be deterred by its off-putting title, it is an invaluable addition to the as yet small number of more advanced grammars. However, its chief use lies not perhaps where the authors intended. A fallacy of Soviet language teaching is the idea that grammar is the answer to everything. This is an optical illusion deriving no doubt from the vast amount of grammar Russian possesses. It is only when this grammar is known that one begins to learn Russian, and one can only regret that the authors give so much attention to matters such as

agreement, subject and predicate, and vocatives, which the foreign learner can find in any elementary textbook.

The foreigner's greatest need is guidance to what Russians actually say to enable him to stop merely dressing his native thoughts in Russian garb. To some extent this too is a question of grammar, but of the kind of grammar which is little susceptible to legislation; for example the aspect of the infinitive, use of the predicative adjective and, as in all languages, use of prepositions. Fortunately this book contains much that is elsewhere difficult to find on such problems; for example that *nel'zya* followed by an imperfective infinitive denotes prohibition, by a perfective infinitive denotes impossibility. More information on these lines could only have improved the book.

It is, however, in its examples that the abiding quality of the book lies. One could advise the student simply to read and memorise as much of the material as he can, for it is excellently chosen both as linguistic capital in its own right and as analogical patterns for the student's own ventures into Russian composition.

A 'FOUR-DECKER' IN STAGNANT WATERS

I. Levidova

NOT so long ago Lawrence Durrell (born 1912), the English poet and author of several novels and travel books, was known only to a quite narrow circle of people. Now, however, in the bourgeois press of the West, one quite often meets the assertion, seldom backed by argument, that Durrell is one of the leading writers of the last decade. This reputation he owes to his tetralogy *Alexandria Quartet*, consisting of the novels *Justine* (1957), *Balthazar* (1958), *Mountolive* (1958) and *Clea* (1960).

In *Justine*, the author tells of a group of people living in Alexandria and its suburbs on the eve of World War II, and linked together by the most complicated, fluctuating, and at times mysterious relationships.

These are the rich landowner Leila, an Egyptian woman educated in Europe; her sons, Narooz, manager of the estate, and Nessim, a banker; Nessim's Jewish wife, Justine; a Greek cabaret dancer, Melissa; Darley, a young teacher from Ireland; an Egyptian business man, Capodistria; and the English characters—Pursewarden, a writer; Mountolive, a diplomat; Clea, an artist; and Scobie, a policeman.

Around this cosmopolitan group the complicated intrigues of the tetralogy are woven.

Exactly the same events take place in the second and third books as in the first, but they are related from the points of view of Balthazar and Mountolive. Their actions are attributed to other motives and their characters are further revealed from a new angle. Only in *Clea* does the action take place several years later.

With his very first lines the author informs us that his book is an 'investigation of modern love', and the tetralogy is, indeed, all about love in its most diverse forms and variations. Its characters, as it were, perform an endless, many-figured dance, in which the important thing is the change of partners.

In all the novels except *Mountolive* the narrator and lyric character is Darley, a poor, budding writer, shy and disposed to fantasy. His friendship, begun

Alexandria Quartet ('*Justine*', '*Balthazar*', '*Mountolive*', '*Clea*'), by Lawrence Durrell (Faber & Faber, London, 1957-60).

by chance, with Nessim and Justine (who to his amazement and delight becomes his mistress) introduces this modest little man to a world of brilliance and shadows, of worldly lionesses, influential business men, writers, artists and diplomats.

Here we have disappearances, mysterious murders at hunt and ball, investigations, sinister intrigues, risky political conspiracies, incest, sexual perversion, black magic—all of which seems like the recipe for a classical ‘penny dreadful’. However, the matter is more complicated here, for Durrell is undoubtedly very talented.

The tetralogy has become a best seller, and there are good reasons for this other than the publisher’s advertisements. Durrell is called a romantic because he searches for, if not exceptional, at any rate unusual characters and situations. He manages the none-too-probable plot skilfully. In his dissertations on human nature and the secrets of the literary profession he is shrewd, witty and aphoristic. He is able to describe people without taking pen from paper, in one line.

But everything revealing itself to the writer’s five senses, right down to the most unattractive and even loathsome details, serves him as a source of æsthetic enjoyment. Aesthetic, sensual poison is Durrell’s distinguishing feature, and it is just this that prevents him from becoming a romantic in the true sense of the word.

Under the rainbow-hued peacock plumage, under the, at first, fascinating story of splendour and dirt, of colours and smells, of the haunts, bazaars, coffee-bars and homes of ancient, sultry and openly depraved Alexandria oozes inexorably something petty, poor and, in fact, simply boring. One gets just this sensation of boredom, of deadly monotony, right from the first lines of *Clea*, when, after a very evocative description of an air-raid warning in the port of Alexandria, the author passes on to the final round in the change of partners.

But all the same, to many English readers, accustomed of late to books whose atmosphere is at times more dreary than a London fog, and to writers who turn out for universal review the tiniest details of sickeningly familiar everyday life, Durrell appeared like a bright exotic bird that had flown from the tropics to the grey mire of the English winter.

However, voices of another note sounded in the unanimous choir of the critics’ praise. Pamela Hansford Johnson in England and C. Rollo in America declared in no uncertain terms that the novels of the tetralogy are extremely affected and saturated with cheap effects, and that the pre-war Alexandria presented by Durrell has nothing in common with actuality.

One of England’s most notable writers, talking about new books to Soviet critics in Moscow, expressed himself about this work thus: ‘When you read all of these books you get a sensation of having eaten too many sweets.’ Durrell himself, speaking of his intense interest as a poet and novelist in form, concluded that it could mean that he had a second-rate talent. His words did not pass unnoticed. An article appeared in the West German press headed ‘A second-rate genius’.

It would appear that Durrell has not been badly endowed as regards talent, but there is a deep flaw in his spiritual world, in his intellectual system, in his ideas about man. The boldness, resilience and originality of the visual and sensual image in his books contrast in the most pitiful manner with the amazing lack of human interest of his characters, notwithstanding their deliberate psychological complexity.

As a result the colourful turns into prettiness, sensibility into vulgarity, and Rabelaisian *joie-de-vivre* into unhealthy obscenity.

However modern Durrell’s technique and dialogue may appear, the *Quartet*

reeks not only of a mixture of Parisian perfumes, sultry dust and decay, but also of something very dated—the painful love stories of some Elinor Glyn or that luminary of the last century, Ouida. The shortcoming of Durrell's basic idea—the idea of man's character as a series of masks (that is, in essence, the negation of the objective existence of character)—hardly requires demonstration. Man's character can be 'many-layered', and contradictory and unexpected in its manifestations, but it always exists, and exists mainly under some definite positive or negative symbol.

Durrell's tetralogy quickly acquired the name of a 'four-decker novel'. The author himself considered it an attempt at the creation of a 'word continuum, a stereoscopic whole, three sides of which are made up of space and the fourth of time'.

According to himself, he wanted in these four novels (which ideally should be read simultaneously) to use Einstein's theory of relativity and Freud's thesis on the splitting of the human ego in artistic creation. Sharing his observations on this with interviewers, he told of a mathematician friend who found his analogy with Einstein 'mad'.

Without bandying epithets, it is nevertheless possible to say with certainty that Durrell's tetralogy bears as much relation to the great scholar's conclusions about the relativity of the categories of space and time as, let us say, the hare has to the shed in the stories of the proverbial schoolgirl. True, everything that happens to his heroes, everything that makes up their real moral make-up, the essence of their mutual relations, bears a most relative character. The true motives for their actions, the new sides to their characters, do not manifest themselves at once and appear in sharply contradictory interpretations.

Here one may recall Priestley's *Dangerous Corner*, but Albert Einstein certainly has nothing to do with the matter.

This playing with scientific concepts adds no lustre to the *Quartet*.

As for Freud, Durrell builds quite big foundations out of his main hypotheses—vulgarised, of course. There is nothing new in this either.

So in the shipyard of his imagination Durrell has built a 'four-decker ship', painted it vividly, peopled it with a multitude of strange passengers, lit the fires in its boilers, and even hoisted philosophical sails above it for greater effect and speed. But, alas, his ship is in stagnant waters.

Inostrannaya literatura, 1961. No.4. Translated by J.P.

Books

MASTER OF THE DON COUNTRY

Harvest on the Don: a sequel to Virgin Soil Upturned. Mikhail Sholokhov. Trs. H. Stevens. (Putnam, 1960. 399pp. 21/-.)

Tales from the Don. Mikhail Sholokhov. Trs. H. Stevens. (Putnam, 1961. 285pp. 18/-.)

THE task of translating from a language in which pictorial effects are not weakened, as they are in English, by numerous prepositions, articles and other utility words is presented in its most difficult form by an artist such as Sholokhov, whose epic narratives blend outside nature very intimately with all human activities. The

senses are all awake as one reads Sholokhov's prose. But his art is not that of mere word-painting. The impressions he supplies are perceived somewhere near the heart. He is a poet. The word 'epic' is perfectly fitting when applied to his work. Among the great names of European literature, the one that can best be linked with his is that of Victor Hugo. Both are poets. Both are 'positive romantics' (to use Gorki's term). But their poetry is not confined to an individual existence. It is not that of a quivering sensitivity into which the outside world may come only as an exquisite pleasure or pain. Theirs is the poetry of the sky that is good in spite of the blistering sun, of the earth that is good in spite of all the blood that

has been shed upon it, and of men who are good in that they are men, even when they are scoundrels and ride at you with a sabre raised aloft to strike.

All Sholokhov's novels and stories about the Don Cossacks published between 1925 and 1960 may be looked upon as episodes in one epic history of the Don country from the time of World War I, through the civil war, the establishment of Soviet rule and the introduction of collective farming. *Harvest on the Don* is the English title given to the second half (published 1955-60) of *Virgin Soil Upturned* (first half 1932), which constitutes the last phase of that history. The English title is well chosen, as are the other titles of the Putnam translations, *And Quiet Flows the Don* and *The Don Flows Home to the Sea*, the two halves of *The Quiet Don* (1928-9 and 1937-40). *Harvest on the Don* should be read last to be properly appreciated. By itself it will seem hesitant and lacking in direction. But as the gradual slowing-down of the vast flow of the Don epic it is as it should be, slow and quiet. The elegiac tone of the last pages ('... the Don nightingales had sung their last song for those dear friends of mine ... the ripened wheat had whispered its last farewell ...') enables one to put down the book with the feeling that all is done that was to do.

Tales from the Don is a collection of stories first published in 1925-6. The English version follows the 1956 Russian edition. It is the first English translation.

Mr. Stevens is to be congratulated on having kept the feel of the original, especially in the short stories, where a certain loss of evocative power, as compared with the Russian text, is made up for as far as possible by the scrupulous care with which each significant element of each Russian sentence is built into the English version. In the longer narrative the English dialogue is not always natural; but what translator has ever managed to make dialogue natural without sacrificing its national character? Translation is by nature doomed to imperfection, as it is to infidelity.

J. S. SPINK.

PROPHETIC FLASHES

An Anthology of Russian Literature in the Soviet Period. Trs. and ed. Bernard Guilbert Guerny. (Modern Library Paperback. 452pp. 12/-.)

THE title is either misleadingly accurate or accurately misleading. Works by *émigré* writers, published only outside the Soviet Union, are included. The quality of the translation is good, but British readers must be prepared for the inner translation necessary when estimating what type of character speaks of an 'ornery' wind or is always saying 'kinda'.

A word needs to be said about the editorial

tone and policy. Political differences are always spoken of as 'theological'. The editor writes that he has 'striven to be as objective as possible'. It has, however, not been possible for him to avoid such generalisations as '... no country has so vastly exceeded its quota of literary trimmers, getters-on, fat cats and trained seals, of writers who attend so many literary congresses, conventions, seminars, who deliver so many speeches, conduct so vast a correspondence, fill so many positions in the writing trades organisations and do so very, very little writing'. Really, *no country*?

A brief historical survey describes how, 'with the Party as midwife, Social (*sic*) Realism was born', and does not mention Gorki's role. This is followed by the 'objective' comment, 'Since then the government has made the caponisation of writers a delightful do-it-yourself project and any Soviet writer who gets into ideological-theological difficulties can fully rely upon much the same sort of loyal support and staunch defence as that which a Hollywood script-writer, let us say, may expect and get from his colleagues in similar circumstances.' This hitting both ways is sometimes combined with an archness of style which makes the precise meaning hard to come by: 'It is axiomatic, by now, that no Soviet writer can possibly die in his bed of natural causes, but, according to non-Soviet and therefore reputable press dispatches, those were the incredible circumstances of Zoshchenko's death.'

This kind of double-irony and near-obscure is a great pity, because there is much useful information contained in the editorial notes when it can be scraped clean of spite and disentangled from words like 'chrestomathies' and 'muliebrile'.

The volume includes one of the best and most typical of Babel's Odessa pieces, an early Gorki, stories by Fadeev, Alexei Tolstoy and Ehrenburg, and a novel of 185 pages, 'We', written by Zamiatin in 1920, which has never appeared in the Soviet Union, though we are told that it was read to the Leningrad Writers' Union and its contents were well known in literary circles. It is almost certainly one of the influences, I would go as far as to say one of the sources, of Orwell's *1984*. The secret police are called 'The Guardians', people are 'numbers', love is forbidden, etc. But the launching of a space-ship is seen as taking place 1,000 years after the establishment of 'The One State', in which all have no wills but that of 'The Benefactor'. The first space-ship took off in rather less time than that, and when results of the excesses of the cult of the individual are being successfully overcome. For all that, 'We' is a brilliant piece of work full of prophetic flashes and probing deep into the complex questions of the relations of the individual to the group.

D. C. WALLIS.

EPIC OF OLD RUSSIA

The Song of Igor's Campaign. Trs. Vladimir Nabokov. (Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 135pp. 18/.)

THIS is a new English translation of the famous medieval Russian poem *Slovo o polku Igoreve*, by the author of *Lolita*, *Invitation of a Beheading*, etc. It can be viewed both as a scholarly contribution to Slavonic studies and as an exercise in artistic interpretation. Ever since its rediscovery at the end of the 18th century, the *Slovo* has stimulated scholars to study its origin and genuineness, language, imagery and historical setting, and tempted poets to recast it into modern verse. According to the author (p. 82), the present translation was started for the purely utilitarian purpose of providing American students of Russian with an English text. Consequently, it has been supplied with historical, philological and bibliographical notes, a map showing where the events described in the poem probably took place and a genealogical table of the house of Rurik, among whose numerous progeny Russia came to be divided into apanages.

Even to be appreciated as a work of art the poem is in need of such information, for it bristles with references to events not always recorded in the chronicles, to customs long forgotten and different princes bearing the same name; moreover, it is replete with terms for armoury, clothing and hunting appliances the meanings of which are uncertain, and geographical place-names the locations of which are in dispute. So any reader will be grateful to Nabokov for the information he has condensed in his foreword, the notes to the foreword and the commentary to the text. He presents the latter broken up into short lines, not for the sake of rhythm but solely—so he says—for the purpose of easier reference; furthermore, he has 'ruthlessly sacrificed manner to matter . . . to give a literal rendering of the text' as he understood it. This is no easy task considering that the poem was composed about A.D. 1187 in a language already archaic and unfamiliar to the 16th-century scribe assumed to have copied the sole manuscript of the poem which survived until it was published in 1800; eventually it, too, was lost when Moscow went up in flames during Napoleon's occupation.

A writer in his own right, Nabokov knows the magic power of language. Contrary to H. G. Cross, he uses sparingly uncommon and obsolete words within the fabric of straightforward modern English to convey the epic atmosphere of the poem. The vatic Boyan composes *lauds* and *paeans* to princes, from Vladimir of yore to nowadays Igor, who sets foot in his golden stirrup to ride out in the *champaign*; soon the Russian land is behind the *culmen*; after his defeat Igor, the prince, switches from a saddle of gold to a *thrall's* saddle and over the Russian

land the Kumans spread like a *brood of pards*, etc. The concise precision of the original's imagery can be sensed in sentences describing Igor's misfortunes 'forefelt by the birds in the oakscrub. The wolves in the ravines conjure the storm. The erns, with their squalling, summon the beasts to the bones. The foxes yelp at the vermilion shields', or during his escape, 'like an ermine, Igor has sped to the reeds and [settled] upon the water like a white duck. He leaped upon the swift steed, and sprang off it [and ran on] like a demon wolf and sped to the meadowland of the Donets', etc. Some assonances survive, as in 'what dins unto me, what rings unto me', or the rhyme is replaced by an alliteration as in the reference to Vsevolod's 'dear beloved . . . the wonts and ways'. Occasionally the sacrifice to literal rendering seems excessive, for instance, when Igor addresses his *druzhina* as 'guards', Yaroslavna mourns her 'husband' rather than her beloved (*lada*), and *zorya* is translated as effulgences on the grounds that the word ambiguously means dawn and sunset in Russian. In translating poetry something has to be sacrificed, because words with semantically the same meaning may possess different emotional overtones. However, the overtones with which the modern Russian reader endows old words may be different from those felt by his forebears seven or eight centuries ago.

E. K.

REVOLUTIONARY IN BALLET

Fokine: Memoirs of a Ballet Master. Trs. Vitale Fokine, ed. Anatole Chujoy. (Constable. 318pp., illus. 42/-)

FOKINE'S *Memoirs* is an absorbing book through which pulsates his magnificent personality—sincere, passionate, artistically erudite. I could not put it away until I had finished reading it.

It covers his entire life and career. Some of the most fascinating pages are those where, as a born choreographer, musician and painter, he discovers his talents and takes a reader through the process of his creative methods which have effected a choreographic revolution based on the classical heritage. His talents, education and artistic activities are many-sided. We read about his playing in the famous Andreiev balalaika orchestra which on one occasion performed in conjunction with the symphony orchestra under the baton of Arthur Nikisch himself. From early youth he travelled in Russia and abroad, visiting the Caucasus, Crimea, Austria, Hungary, France and Italy, studying museums, cathedrals, ruins of antiquity, etc. His baggage included a box of oil paints and books on art history. He was interested in social philosophy, and read Kropotkin, Bakunin, Bebel and Lassalle.

This literature, he tells us, had a bearing on his future artistic life and inspired him to make ballet accessible to the masses and lead it away from a narrow circle of balletomanes and its situation as a part of court entertainment. Tolstoy and other writers also influenced his attitude to art and life. He persuaded the inspector of the theatre school to buy a large library on ballet subjects and introduce into the curriculum the study of aesthetics.

He resents the way some critics spoke of Diaghilev as if the latter participated in the composition of choreography. Some of them now regard this as a delusion of Fokine. Actually his resentment had real grounds. Even now some writers seem to be ignorant of what Diaghilev's functions were. To take one example: in the luxury edition of *Picasso's Picassos* (Macmillan, 1961), on page 72 David Douglas Duncan makes the following statement about Picasso: 'He was catapulted into the provocative atmosphere of Jean Cocteau's writing, Erik Satie's music, Diaghilev's *choreography* [my italics], Leonid Massine's dancing—and the girls of the corps de ballet.' If, with reference to Diaghilev's activity, some critics used ambiguous expressions this was not Fokine's fault.

Fokine pays a moving tribute to some painters who collaborated with him, particularly to Goncharova, whose art, he says, he values and loves greatly, and whose *décor* for *Le Coq d'Or* he considers one of the finest creations he has ever seen on the stage, although for *The Firebird* he prefers Golovine's *décor* as corresponding better to his choreographic conception.

Fokine condemns 'modernistic' dances which can become 'smoke screens under which dilettantism may hide its ignorance', and their vogue in America increased his opposition to them, especially when some famous Russian classical dancers were placed in a tragic situation through being unable to make their living. He writes: 'Amateurs are always trying that which seems easy to perform, and usually follow the line of least resistance. My opinion seemed to me entirely justified when I visited several lectures at the New School of Social Research . . .' He gives a witty description of his last visit, when Martha Graham was the lecturer. All that he saw there was 'ugly in form and hateful in spirit'. His brilliant and biting repartees to Miss Graham's arguments, his sarcastic illustrations of her choreographic ideas, which made the movements she advocated appear strained, unnatural, comic and absurd, her remark that Fokine 'did not know anything about body movements', and his opinion about Miss Graham's defence of her 'art' (in his inverted commas), summed up by his two words 'ignorance and arrogance'—all this arouses cathartic laughter. It is worth getting the book for this chapter alone.

The chapters 'Birth of a Choreographer', 'Associations with Diaghilev' and others are also most interesting, but I have to leave it to readers to discover their secrets.

V.K.

BRITAIN'S INCOME

National'nyi dokhod Anglii v poslevoennyi period (National Income of Great Britain in the Post-war Period). V. Kudrov. (Sotsekgiz. 172pp. 20 kop.)

THE task of 'overtaking the most advanced capitalist countries in *per capita* consumption in an historically short space of time' has turned the attention of Soviet economic research institutes towards international comparisons of national income. Just as American specialists on the USSR's economy have recalculated its national income on a 'bourgeois' basis, Soviet economists use Marxist concepts (as far as different methods of data collection permit) to evaluate those of the main capitalist countries.

The first work on Britain is this serious and knowledgeable book by Dr. Kudrov (of the Economic Research Institute of the State Economic Council), in which he examines the movement of the UK national income and its components over the period 1948-58, with occasional extensions to 1959, and making some comparisons with pre-war. It is in four sections. The first is a general critique of the concepts of income generation, distribution and utilisation which underlie the official western methodology, shared in the main by the UK. The second examines the official estimates comprised in the UK Blue Book of national income and expenditure; in the third section (in the reviewer's opinion the most interesting) the author recalculates, on a Marxist basis, new magnitudes for the above concepts. Very briefly, this requires the elimination of the so-called double counting involved in the western inclusion of 'services'. On the Soviet definition, national income comprises the output of the spheres of manufacturing and extractive industry, agriculture, forestry and fishing, transport, communications, and some parts of distribution. This is not, however, the place to argue out the relative merits of the two methods. It is sufficient to say that Dr. Kudrov shows himself well acquainted with all the important theoretical and empirical studies done in Britain and the USA and at the international agencies. One conclusion is that the Blue Book estimates would have to be reduced by 25 per cent on the average to give comparability with the USSR's own official figures.

In part of a book of 160 pages it is clearly not possible to demonstrate the recalculation in detail, but because this is the first monograph on this subject, and because Dr.

Kudrov shows familiarity with western material, it would have been very valuable to have, in text or appendix, the detailed working tables from which the summary recalculations were derived.

No doubt the requirements of the Soviet audience for which the 3,500 copies of this book were published (at the absurdly low price of 20 kopecks; one may instance a similar paperback published by a British university press at 12/6) are different; but scholars here have become accustomed to this (I think valuable) practice.

For the less technically minded reader the conclusions on the distribution and redistribution of income may be more interesting. Here the author's acceptance of a growth of *per capita* real wages over the decade to 1958 by some 17 per cent is a continuation of the advance in attitude already marked by the *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism* over the dogmatism of the earlier *Textbook of Political Economy*. Some of the arguments for an increased intensity of labour and incidence of accidents do not seem to me adequately substantiated (oddly enough, nothing is said about the growth in the number of married women at work). Nor, in examining the redistribution between capital and labour via public finance, is enough said about social services as compared with taxation. There is here, I think, a tendency to underestimate the role of industrial and political struggle in this period as factors in the absolute advances, and Soviet statisticians would be unwise to infer too much from declining *per capita* consumption of butter compared with pre-war while giving only brief mention to the growth in the possession of consumer durables.

There are a few minor misprints and some quotations from secondary sources of material which might better have been given from the primary ones with which the author was clearly acquainted, but these are small blemishes in a work whose quality and interest are high.

R. BELLAMY.

TEACHING RUSSIAN

Materialy programmy po russkomu yazyku dlya studentov i aspirantov inostrantsev. (Universitet druzhby narodov. 1960. 38pp. Unpriced.)

Metodicheskii kommentarii k 1-4 chasti programmy po russkomu yazyku (elementarnyi kurs). (Universitet druzhby narodov. 1960. 39pp. Unpriced.)

Materialy programmy po russkomi yaziku dlya studentov-Indonesiitsev. (Moscow. 1960. 127pp. Unpriced.)

Materialy programmy po russkomu yazyku dlya studentov-Arabov. (Universitet druzhby narodov. 1960. 107pp. Unpriced.)

Leksicheski i minimum po russkomu yazyku dlya studentov-inostrantsev pervogo goda obucheniya. (Universitet druzhby narodov. 1960. 82pp. Unpriced.)

SCR Education and Psychology Bulletin.
Autumn 1961. (SCR. 39pp. 3/-)

FRIENDSHIP University in Moscow has accepted hundreds of students from under-developed countries in the past few years. Its first task is to teach them sufficient Russian for them to follow a proper university course after one year's study of the language. This has presented the teachers with a unique challenge and opportunity. The five booklets named above, used at the university, gather together some of their experience and are intended to help those who have to continue the work. It seems that there is probably other material used in the course which has not yet been received here, but these five booklets themselves are a valuable aid to teachers of Russian to English-speaking pupils.

The syllabus seems close to, but not identical with, Nina Potapova's well-known Russian course. The commentary on the syllabus is a most useful guide for teachers on how to introduce the material in the course, on which problems to meet 'head on' at a given stage and which to put off to a later date. This is a constant problem for all teachers and, while there is room for disagreement on particular points, few would dispute that such a guide is a useful aid.

The two most useful booklets, however, are those containing the experience of teaching Arab and Indonesian students. Both take the course step by step and analyse the particular difficulties of Russian for Arabic and Indonesian speakers. They show why the difficulties arise by comparing Russian with the native tongue, and suggest solutions. For example, Arabs and Indonesians, like English-speaking students, have difficulty knowing what case to use after a negative. The explanation usually given on whether to use the accusative or the genitive is that use of the genitive is giving way in favour of the accusative. Here, however, we have a further, and rather more definite, explanation: 'In Arabic only the accusative case can be used, while in Russian either the accusative or genitive case may be used. As a rule the noun in the accusative case means a definite object or person (*On ne poluchil pismo—to, kotore dolzhen byl poluchit'*). In the genitive case the noun means any object of person (*On ne poluchil pisma*). The attention of Arab students must be drawn to those instances in Russian when the accusative case cannot be used. The noun in these instances means an abstract concept and the verb is used in a figurative sense.' Examples are given to illustrate the point.

Both booklets are full of such useful advice; and although many of the difficulties are not relevant for English-speaking students some of them are. The approach is a break with the habit of explaining the

difficulties of Russian in terms that are clear to Russians but not to non-Russians; for example, the habit of explaining the differences between the prepositional and accusative of movement by asking whether the phrase answers the question *gde?* or *kuda?* is of little help to the English-speaking student. (If he can answer this question he probably has no need to ask it anyway.)

There is need for an English-Russian study that teachers could use, based on experience of the most frequent mistakes made by students.

The minimum vocabulary is a small, very simple, alphabetical collection of 3,300 words, mastery of which, experience has shown, enables students to take up their studies in the faculty of their choice. A vocabulary of this nature should be a useful guide to teachers of Russian anywhere in the world.

The Society for Cultural Relations has rendered a considerable service by translating and publishing articles on the psychology of teaching a foreign language in this issue of its *Education and Psychology Bulletin* (together with notes on the changes being made in the USSR in language teaching). It may be a comfort to English teachers of Russian to know that their Soviet colleagues teaching English face similar difficulties and problems in their work. The scope of these articles, however, is wider than those of English-Russian teaching. They attempt to answer some of the basic psychological problems involved in mastering a foreign language—to progress from repetition of previously learned material to the stage 'when a person freely and creatively uses the medium of a foreign language in order to express the thoughts which come into his head at any given moment, i.e. when he creates verbal formulations previously absent from his speech experience.'

B. P. POCKNEY.

RUSSIAN READERS

Short Stories. A. Chekhov. (FLPH. 127pp. 7/6.)

Nikita's Childhood. Aleksei Tolstoy. (FLPH. 96pp. 3/-.)

Short Novels. I. S. Turgenev. (FLPH. 168pp. 5/6.)

(All obtainable from Central Books.)

EVERY teacher and student of Russian is faced with the problem of finding enough suitable reading material, stressed, and with adequate explanatory footnotes, for classroom and home studies. Three such readers—adapted and abridged classics—are now available in this FLPH 'Russian Readers for Beginners' series, although they require more than an elementary knowledge of Russian for their full appreciation.

The 10 Chekhov stories (they include 'Poprygunya', 'Shutochka' and 'Pere-

polokh') are all very enjoyable, and do not suffer too much from the adaptation—which consists mainly of eliminating some adjectives, colloquialisms and references to service ranks in pre-revolutionary Russia. They provide the reader with a variety of human situations, described by Chekhov with great skill, richness of language, and sympathy. All but 'Poprygunya' are very short, and suitable for quick classroom reading. A long story tends to drag out over too many lessons, lessening the attention and interest of students in the work.

Nikita's Childhood, an adapted and abridged version of Aleksei Tolstoy's autobiographical novel, provides further reading material, just as enjoyable but in a different mood and style. It has 10 chapters, each an episode in Nikita's busy life, seen through the eyes of a 10-year-old boy living on a country estate in pre-revolutionary Russia. Again, the language is not altogether elementary—although that of a little boy, simple and direct, it will require considerable attention from the student with a limited vocabulary.

It is difficult not to compare the adapted versions of Turgenev's two short novels, 'Asya' and 'Pervaya Lubov', with the originals because some of Turgenev's sensitive explorations into the emotions of two young people in love for the first time have been somewhat lost. This applies particularly to 'Pervaya Lubov', the autobiographical novel which was Turgenev's favourite work. In it he deals objectively yet with deep sympathy and understanding with the emotional upheaval experienced by the 16-year-old Vladimir in love with a young woman his senior by a few years, who herself is very deeply involved with his father. The adapted version unfortunately loses some of the tension of the original, but it holds the reader's interest in both the people and the situation, and gives a good sampling of Turgenev's style and insight into the workings of the human mind.

The three readers, with their different styles of the Russian written word, are a good introduction to more advanced reading. It is hoped that more such readers will be available here to introduce Russian writers, contemporary as well as old, to students, who are in great need of interesting and stimulating reading material in the early stages of their studies; also that students will be encouraged to master the originals.

The readers have explanatory notes on each page of the more difficult passages; and each has a comprehensive Russian-English vocabulary, which includes aspects and conjugations of verbs, adjectival endings, cases governed by certain prepositions, genders of nouns, etc.

All in all, these readers make a valuable addition to the bookshelves of both teachers and students.

LYDIA READ.

Communication

We have received the following from Dr. L. Crome, M.C., M.R.C.P., concerning the review by Mr. Edwin Morgan of Ilya Ehrenburg's *People and Life* in our spring issue.

EDWIN MORGAN in his review of Ehrenburg's *People and Life* (*ASJ*, Spring 1962) shows a certain lack of sympathy for the author. He asserts that Ehrenburg is a minor novelist and a minor poet with a tortuous creative past and a personality that one does not naturally warm to as one warms to Prishvin and Marshak. While admitting that the work under review is decidedly of more than minor interest, Morgan hints at doubtful motives on the author's part in 'establishing his credentials as a pre-revolutionary agitator' in the early chapters of the book.

It is not my intention, God forbid, to defend Ehrenburg against Morgan. No writer of our time has made more enemies and more friends—for exactly the same valid reason. Morgan is fully entitled to his views. However, half-hearted approval and condescension to Ehrenburg's work must not remain the last word in the pages of the *ANGLO-SOVIET JOURNAL*.

Is Ehrenburg really a minor novelist and a minor poet? I do not know how wise it is in general to classify writers in this way, but I am sure that in the case of Ehrenburg the question is totally irrelevant. It is certain that Ehrenburg was often hasty and confused. It may be true that his writing does not measure up in some ways to that of the great unread—Joyce and Proust, Mann and Rilke. Who cares? What really matters is that he was never a single step behind the very front lines in all the vital battles of his three generations. He never wrote a line in cold blood.

I first saw and read Ehrenburg's *Julio Jurenito* almost 40 years ago—a strange book with a weird futuristic design on the cover. Then novel followed novel—all laying bare the cant and humbug of our morals and dealing later, after his return to Russia, with the daring and fire as well as the grime, exhaustion and despair in the workshops of a new life. Disagree with him? Yes. Hate every neuron and muscle of his? That I can understand. But not to warm to him?

I missed Ehrenburg's reporting of the Spanish war, although I did see him once in the distance when he was visiting our unit. But who can forget his *Fall of Paris* and, particularly, his later articles on the German invasion of Russia? In the cool of evening in the African desert in 1942 I would look at the mail, if any came. There it was: all the fire, irony, love and hatred, condensed in call after call, direct and poetic as the Bible—to sweep the vermin from the world, to make safe the cradles of all infants.

I have not read much of Ehrenburg's lyrics, but a couple of lines come back from a poem of that period: 'When they announce my death, it will bring back to readers the flutter of newspaper pages. I would they were the rustle of chestnut leaves.'

Anxiety returned later. One feared. One saw Ehrenburg and others accused of 'tortuosity', of cosmopolitanism—a new sin. (Perhaps not really new: Heine had been guilty of it, and so was Karl Marx and, possibly, Jesus of Nazareth before him.) This danger was hardly over when new clouds came with the threat of another war, and Ehrenburg was once again committed to the hilt.

His latest, as yet unfinished, work has already been acclaimed as one of the great chronicles of the recent past. Its sincerity, warmth and humanity had not been equalled for many a day in Russian writing. With millions of other

readers I wish Ehrenburg health and strength to write it to the end. I wish him to see the day when lasting peace, for which he strives and for which we all long, is established in the world.

* * *

Mr. Morgan makes the following rejoinder:

I RESPECT Dr. Crome's views, and far be it from me to turn people against Ehrenburg. I do confess to 'a certain lack of sympathy for the author', but I am not alone in feeling this. There are certain mental reservations which I think a reasonable person ought still to have about Ehrenburg; I hope, indeed, that these reservations will be cleared or at any rate modified by the publication of future volumes of his autobiography.

I stick to my view that Ehrenburg is a creative writer of less than major importance. I should make it clear, however, that I use such terms as 'major' and 'minor' with some care, and I am judging him by the highest standards. Ehrenburg has done good and valuable work in a variety of genres—the novel, poetry, criticism and journalism—without, it seems to me, reaching the front rank in any one of them. What he lacks is the steady devotedness of the real artist. *Julio Jurenito* is a delightful book, and *The Fall of Paris* has a certain massive historical coverage which is impressive, but for all that no one would think of giving Ehrenburg a very high place in the development of the 20th-century novel; even less of 20th-century poetry. Dr. Crome's philistine dismissal of Joyce, Proust, Mann and Rilke can only weaken his case for Ehrenburg.

Like Dr. Crome, I wish Ehrenburg well, and I particularly look forward to the remainder of his chronicles. It is for these, as I suggested in my review, that I think he will in the future be most gratefully remembered.

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